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ON THE INCREASE OF CLERICAL LABOURS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CHRISTIAN EXAMINER.

SIR,

I read some months ago, with great interest, as I doubt not many of your readers did, a sermon from one of our brethren, on the demands of the age upon an earnest and faithful ministry. Removed, as I am, from the sphere of that immediate intercourse and sympathy with other members of my profession, which are the privilege of most of our clergy, this appeal was to me, perhaps, doubly needful as well as peculiarly gratifying. I still remember it with pleasure, and I wish it, and every other effort, to arouse us to a sense of our momentous duties, all success.

But I wish now to bring forward this subject for a different purpose. I wish to bring before your readers the great increase of clerical labours, in consequence of the demands of this age, as an argument for a reasonable and charitable estimate of them.

The rule which Paul lays down for himself, it is proper, or at least it is undoubtedly desirable, that every minister of the Gospel should adopt—that he is ready to do ‘as much as in him is.’ It is desirable, that a clergyman should be placed in circumstances, that will permit him to devote his whole strength and life to the ministry; and if he is so placed, it is proper that he should so devote himself; he is bound to do it. He is bound, that is to say, not by a pecuniary compensation;—

for if any recompense of this sort can claim the service of a man's life, it is not to be met with, at least in this country ;—but he is laid under this obligation by the magnitude and importance of his work.

I admit, then, that the *ability* of a minister is to be the measure of his exertion, of his studying, of his preaching, of his parochial care. But in considering what he *can* do, we are to take into the account his talents, his health, his situation, and, I will add again, the circumstances of society, the demands of the age upon him. And these last, I repeat, are the considerations, which I am about to propose as an argument for a fair and candid consideration of clerical labours.

Every year, Sir, strengthens my conviction of the importance of that good understanding between the clergy and people, which it is better to preserve by anticipating difficulties, than by explaining them. And one yearly article of your Miscellany would not be lost, I believe, if it should tend to promote that mutual consideration and harmony, on which so much of the benefit of public instruction depends. And much of this benefit *is*, undoubtedly, thus depending ;—I was ready to say unhappily depending. At least, it is an indication of a low state of moral sentiment, that any portion of the community should make the character of a minister the standard of their religion ; that their religion should rest more on the conduct of others, than on their own reflections and purposes ; that they should consider every fault they can find with the clergy as an apology for their own sins.

You will easily infer, that I consider this subject as open to discussion. Certain I am that it *finds* ample discussion in the community. The account between the clergy and people, you will agree with me, I believe, is not yet settled.

It is curious to observe how much men are governed by names, and how opinions once attached to these names descend with them from generation to generation. I know not but the rise of sects and parties, both religious and political, originates partly in the difficulty, which this fact furnishes. There seems to be no way to put certain ideas out of the general mind, but to put away the names, with which they are associated. And thus, we have in the rise of sects and parties, little more than the succession of old principles under new denomiations.

The great professions of life, however, cannot so easily change their names; and these, therefore, will furnish the best illustration of what I was saying. Thus, in the profession of the law; because in former days and worse periods of society, and when the law itself was a more complicated, vague, and indefinite subject, than it now is,—because, I say, in these circumstances, lawyers were unusually addicted, as they were much exposed to the use of art and intrigue, and to take undue advantage of what they called ‘the glorious uncertainty of the law,’—it has therefore gone into a maxim with the mass of mankind, and is indeed one of the most fixed and inveterate of the popular impressions, that a lawyer will be, and, almost necessarily by his very profession, will be artful and cunning. So say sundry clever stanzas of poetry; so say the legends of olden time; and so the people will have it to be. Take away the *name* of lawyer, which starts up this associated impression, this ghost of a former reality, and the whole difficulty would be removed. A plain understanding of the case as it now exists, unbiassed too by the irritations of defeat in lawsuits, for which lawyers are not responsible, since a worse thing than litigation would be without it, even disorder and injustice without relief;—a plain and fair understanding of the case as it is, I say, would awaken a new set of ideas in those portions of the community where the old ideas remain.—Thus again, physicians are peculiarly liable to the suspicion of quackery, because in former and less enlightened times, they were, that is, many of the profession were, guilty of quackery. And in the same manner, the charge of *indolence*, in the apprehension of many, still lies against the clergy. And the time has been, when it was a just charge. But in this respect, I shall undertake to show, that the times have greatly altered.

It may be thought by those of your readers, who do not themselves entertain this opinion, that at the present day, it exerts little or no influence on the community around them. But while I am obliged to hold a different judgment on this point, I think also, there are other and equally decisive proofs of a prevailing misapprehension of clerical labours. It certainly is not uncommon to hear complaints of clergymen, as doing less than is expected of them. It is said, that they repeat their sermons too often; or that they do not preach enough in their own pulpits;—that they make too frequent

exchanges; or that they do not visit their parishes sufficiently, &c. Not a few clergymen have I known, whose health was actually sinking under the labours of their profession, and yet whose reputation was suffering severely from these complaints. From what complaints? Why, truly, that they were not doing enough, though they were already doing beyond their ability!

I do not ascribe these complaints to an unfriendly disposition in those who make them. On the contrary, they often proceed from a real solicitude for the reputation of the ministry; from an affection for those who discharge this office, and a wish that they may stand high in the confidence of their parishioners and the respect of the world. Indeed, I am tempted to say, and it is my conviction certainly with regard to a portion of our societies, that the clergy, if you will allow the expression, *are made too much of*. From the most enlightened of our communities, indeed, the days of priestly domination have passed away. But there is,—not to say a kind of factitious importance given to them,—there is a party feeling about their respectability, of which they have some cause to complain. There is a sectarian solicitude, and a rivalry of churches, about the amount of their labours,—about their reputation for preaching, and for diligence in the parochial care. They are goaded on, perhaps to do all, nay, more than all that in them lies, by comparisons;—nor only by comparisons,—which it is to be hoped for the credit of all concerned, they do not often hear,—but by the exigency of their situation. The country is broken up into sects; and many depend for their very subsistence on extraordinary exertion. I am not insensible, that in all this there are certain advantages, that perfect security and independence are not very safe for any class of men to enjoy; but still it will be allowed, I think, that the divisions of these times, and the rivalships that grow out of them, are circumstances very trying to those who are engaged in the ministry.

It is not, then, as I have said, from any want of interest or friendship for clergymen, that undue, and as I think, unreasonable demands are made upon them, and that when these fail to be satisfied, complaints are made. But it is that the improved character of society and of religious sentiment, and the consequent change that has taken place in clerical labours, are not sufficiently considered. It is this primarily. And then it is, that intellectual toil, and the lassitude often consequent

upon it, and, in general, that the infirmities of studious and sedentary persons, cannot be justly appreciated by the body of the community.

Let me then endeavour to illustrate somewhat this increased demand upon clerical labour, which has grown out of the improved state of society and of religious sentiment.

Preaching among us has, within the progress of twenty or thirty years, assumed a new character. It was formerly, in this country, almost to the exclusion of all other objects, the preaching of systems of divinity. If you were to look over a body of some thousands of sermons, written fifty years ago, you would be surprised to find how very few of them were of a practical character. I mean now to speak, not without exceptions ; but of the average of sermons of that period. Nor would I be guilty of injustice to past times, by any general and unqualified assertions. The Theology of New England in particular, has, undoubtedly, during the last century, made a progress beyond the rest of the country, if not beyond the rest of the world. I mean, that the Calvinistic, the Orthodox Theology, (so called,) has improved. It has made large strides from the old systems ; and mind has undoubtedly been developed in the preaching of it. There has been abundance of metaphysical disquisition, and this has called forth more intellectual exertion, than would be required in the mere retailing of the articles of a creed, or the definitions of a system. The preaching of systems, then,—the setting forth of a mere dogmatic Theology, has undergone some modification. But still, though modified, it has, to a great extent, been a preaching of systems, and it has been dogmatical. I appeal, with confidence, to those who can remember the prevailing character of preaching thirty or forty years ago,—and I apprehend, the observation need not be withheld from much of the preaching of the present day,—that it was, and is still, to a very great extent, the preaching of systematic Theology, the statement and defence of what are called the true doctrines ; so much so, that by many leading divines of the present day, these doctrines of a merely speculative Theology, are maintained to be the grand instruments of the great religious excitements of the day. Pains is taken in every wearisome repetition of these accounts, to state, with the greatest explicitness and with renewed triumph, that the revival was owing to the more clear

and naked exposition of these glorious doctrines; so that the doctrines, of course, acquire additional recommendation from this source. The true explanation of this boasted doctrinal influence, I may remark in passing, is, that the clearer exposition of the monstrous dogmas of the popular Theology, makes those who hear them, indignant and angry, as it ought to do, and then they are easily frightened into the notion, that this hostility is a sign of some horrible depravity; since it is opposed, they are erroneously told, to the Gospel;—whereupon they are convinced, as they imagine, of sin; and after some paroxysms of terror and distress, their feelings subside into a calm, which they unwittingly take for a true conversion. I say not, by any means, that this account answers to every case of popular conversion; but it explains, I fear, too many of what may be called *doctrinal* conversions.

But to return;—what, then, is the change that has taken place in preaching, among those with whom the old systems of doctrines have fallen, or are falling into less estimation? I answer, that preaching has become, and is becoming more *practical*. It has taken up the untried and difficult task of applying religion as a vital and active principle to the whole sphere and scene of life,—to every thing that a man does,—to every thing that a man thinks and feels, and purposes,—to every duty and temptation, to every danger and exigency of the daily pursuits and cares of men. It proposes the great work of improving human nature; of disenthraling it from the bonds of superstition; of freeing it from the incumbrances of religious prejudice; of developing the causes of its unhappiness; of opening to it, not the scanty springs of sectarian Theology, but the satisfying fountains of sacred contemplation, of religious peace, of immortal life and happiness. When religious discourses were chiefly valued as expositions of some part of a system of doctrines, little more was necessary, than to resort to a convenient Body of Divinity, as it was called, and the whole matter, statement, argument, scriptural quotation, &c. was found already prepared for use. Writing sermons was scarcely more than a business of compiling. It consisted, chiefly, in repeating what others had written, and what, moreover, every body was ready to admit without question or hesitation. But now, in the great work—for herein will I magnify mine office—in the great work of addressing religion to

human nature, and of applying it to human life, to the state of society, and the ever varying pursuits of men,—every power of the mind is put in requisition,—observation and reflection, a careful discrimination of duty, and a wise selection of topics to enforce it, invention and imagination, and all the deep and earnest feelings of the heart. The matter that we have to tell the people, is no longer found in the books. They are to be read indeed ; but they will no longer furnish materials for sermons. At least, they will not to him, whose mind is fixed upon the great and appropriate business of preaching at this day. Life, the active, stirring, bustling scene around us, is our study. A great moral portraiture of human conduct and passions, is to be held up before us ;—a great appeal is to be made to human nature, to its conscience, to its need, to its hope ;—a new and nearer communing with the soul there is to be ; and he who will do any thing of this, will find, that he is put to the exertion and stretch of all his faculties. As society also grows more intelligent and refined, it is more fastidious and difficult to be satisfied. The quickened and earnest spirit of the age, too, has its appropriate desires and necessities ; and God forbid that an earnest ministry should be wanting to gratify them !

To these considerations, let me add, that the writing of sermons is a peculiarly difficult species of composition. There is to be some truth, or truths set forth, explained, supported by arguments or defended against objections, illustrated and enforced ;—there is an influence to be exerted—at least this is the aim of preaching—on the judgment, on the feelings, or the purposes ; and all this is to be done in a discourse, which ordinarily is not to exceed thirty minutes in length. It is not, as in writing a book, where the composer may go on quietly and in some sort indifferently, persuaded that the natural occasions will offer for arousing himself ; but there is to be an earnest, or at least, an interesting address to men in the given compass ; or the discourse is good for nothing. It may be easily inferred, then, that the writing of sermons is a labour, peculiarly fitted to exhaust the mind, and prey upon the health. At least, it is certain that society will not now be satisfied with any thing short of productions of this nature.

Meanwhile, the call for parochial labour, instead of diminishing as the other demand has increased, has in fact, kept pace with it. Both departments of clerical duty have been

proportionably enlarged. There is an unprecedented call upon clergymen among us, for visiting. In proportion as a superstitious reverence for this class of the community, has been happily done away ; in proportion as they have put off the severity of their manners, and have come down from the high places of their authority, and have mingled freely with men ; in proportion as men have become interested in their characters and labours, their society has been desired and valued. I need not enlarge upon this part of the subject, for what I have stated is perfectly notorious. It is so notorious, that you can scarcely go into a parish, and inquire for its peace and prosperity, without hearing complaints from one or another, of the negligence of the minister, in this very respect.

It is to be observed, furthermore, that all this increase of labour, finds fewer hands to discharge it. In the earlier times of our history, many of the churches had two ministers, and the office of visiting the sick was often committed to the deacons and elders. This, now, except in cases of age or ill health, all devolves upon one man.

In these circumstances, I do not deem it unimportant to ask, what is to be done? Here is a double amount of labour, and, in many cases, half the number of persons to perform it. Here are asking, importunate congregations, craving able, refined, earnest discourses, and incessant visiting ; and on the other hand, a failing ministry, sick at heart, dying by premature decay, or travelling in foreign lands for health, or struggling on with miserable lassitude, and after all, with many interruptions and seasons of absence from the people for the recovery of strength and spirits to pursue their labours. It was not so, in former days ; and a comparison in this respect would strongly corroborate the statement I have made with regard to the increase of clerical labours. No class of men in former times enjoyed more health or lived to a greater age than ministers. Now, how rare is it to meet with an aged clergyman in our pulpits ! The fathers, where are they ? Where are the counsels of age to guide the inexperience of our youth, and to give weight to the messages of heavenly wisdom ?

If it shall be thought by any, that I have stated in too dark colours, the health of the clergy ; I have to reply, in the first place, with regard to the fact, that on our New England seaboard,—and this is the region to which all my remarks more

particularly apply,—that on our New England sea-board, it is notorious that the health of a large proportion of clergymen has failed, or is failing them;—that a multitude of them, to which the invalids of no other profession or occupation bear any proportion, are obliged, regularly, every year, to seek in absence or retirement from their duties, relief and restoration. I have to reply in the second place, that the diseases of studious and sedentary persons, are not of a nature to be generally known and understood. They are mostly chronic; they are diseases, of which, as they are not understood, none are willing to complain; they are not commonly revealed to the public eye, till they have proceeded to a fatal extent. And what lassitude and depression, what weariness and sinking of heart, attend the incipient stages of a consumption, the slow wastings of dyspepsia, the gradual wearing out of the constitution, none but they who suffer in these ways, can know.

But I hear it suggested again; ‘why not relax, and go out among your people, and make up for what you cannot study, by what will probably be quite as agreeable to them,—by giving them more of your society?’ This observation mistakes two things. It mistakes the nature of parochial visiting; of parochial visiting, I mean, specifically considered as such. Intercourse of this kind must, or should have in view, something more important than the light and fleeting matters of the day. And to engage in useful, and especially religious conversation, with a great variety of minds and tempers, in all possible situations, is often found to require the most awakened and exhausting exercise of the intellect and heart. A day spent in this way is emphatically a day of exhaustion and fatigue. Again, the idea of finding relaxation in this employment, mistakes the nature and effect of intellectual toil. It is not easy to carry a mind, depressed and worn out with this kind of exertion, into society. I am aware that to many, this may be talking in an unknown tongue. They have no idea, that sitting still all day can be any thing but idleness. They have no idea of any fatigue, but that of the limbs and senses. In fact, with all their complaints of toil; with all their envy, perhaps, of those who sit in their studies, while they labour in the heat of the day; with all the slight they throw upon the toils of professional and studious men, they never know what weariness means! that weariness of the soul, which unnerves and palsies

the whole system, and stretches, as it were, its very sinews upon a rack ! They cannot comprehend it, that the studious often retire to their nightly rest, under a more absolute and prostrating fatigue, than any which ever carries the labouring man to his repose ; and a fatigue too, unlike his, which has a compensation in its sound and refreshing slumbers ; a fatigue that chases sleep from the eyes, and is incapable of calm and healthful repose.

But I need not press this topic further. I have been willing to do it thus far, even at the hazard of being thought to make an appeal in behalf of the clergy to public commiseration, for the sake of asking that reasonable estimate of our labours, and consideration for our deficiencies, which I believe that our congregations are not unwilling, on a real understanding of the case, to give. The case of the clergy, at this day, and in a pretty large section of this country, is certainly a novel one. I believe there never was a period or spot, in the world, where so large demands were made on clerical labour, or where so many have sunk under it.

If now it be asked again, what is to be done ?—for I have not introduced this subject as one of mere speculation ; I have an answer to make for both parties.

I say, let the people be more moderate in their demands on the strength and ability of the ministers they have ; or let them provide more labourers, according to ancient custom, in many of our churches ; or let them provide annual assistance and relief for their regular pastors. Let the community, also, be considerate for this sacred profession, lest by unreasonable demands, they make it a burden, which young men, who have sufficient talent or property to provide for themselves in any other way, shall hesitate to take upon themselves ; lest parents shall shrink from giving up their sons to this too probable sacrifice of health and comfort.

I think I may on the other hand, answer for myself and my brethren, that we are ready to do as much as in us is. No faithful minister, if he is properly supported, will have a particle of strength, which he is not willing to devote ‘on the altar and sacrifice’ of his people’s welfare. But if the demand for labour, for study, for preaching, for parochial visiting, goes beyond our ability,—then we must be allowed to judge for ourselves, and to answer it to our conscience and to God. We

have obligations to ourselves and to our families, which will not permit the thoughtless sacrifice of health and life. That man, surely, does worse than mistake his duty, who utterly incapacitates himself for the performance of it. And yet that rash imprudence, that self-destruction, which would be thought inexcusable in every other pursuit and profession, is considered interesting and meritorious in him, whose business it is to urge the lessons of wisdom and duty

CLERICUS.

REASON AND FAITH.

JOHN NORRIS, one of the old English divines, who was somewhat distinguished in his day as a metaphysician and theologian, and had the courage to attack Locke's Essay, wrote 'An Account of Reason and Faith in relation to the Mysteries of Christianity.' It was intended as an answer to Toland's 'Christianity not Mystorious,'—and is a very ordinary book, full of the parade of technical reasoning and vague general statements. In the application of the argument, there is a sufficiency of that angry and supercilious invective against Unitarians, which was common at that time, and which certainly has not wholly gone out of fashion yet, though its spirit has been in some places a good deal tamed and civilized. But our principal object in adverting to the work now is to observe, that towards the end of the book the author gathers confidence enough, not only to find no objection to what he calls the mysteries of faith, in that surrender of reason, which they require, but to seize upon this very circumstance as a weapon for their defence; for he maintains it to be a manifest truth, that such strange things could not have been of human origin, since man would never have invented doctrines, which lay such heavy burdens on his reason; and consequently they must have come from a higher source. It has generally been thought sufficient to tell reason, that she must lie down in silent adoration before the mysteries of faith; but Norris improves upon this, and assures us, that if a proposition staggers and confounds reason, on that very account it is the more likely to be of divine authority. He calls in to his aid the author of

‘Entretiens sur la Metaphysique et sur la Religion,’ from whom he quotes with much praise the following remarks. ‘The more obscure are our mysteries, strange paradox ! the more credible they now appear to me. Yes, I find even in the obscurity of our mysteries, received as they are by so many different nations, an invincible proof of their truth. How, for instance, shall we accord the Unity with the Trinity, the society of three different persons with the perfect simplicity of the divine nature ? This without doubt is incomprehensible ; but not incredible. It is indeed above us ;—but let us consider a little, and we shall believe it, at least if we will be of the same religion with the apostles. For supposing they had not known this ineffible mystery, or that they had not taught it to their successors, I maintain that it is not possible that a sentiment so extraordinary should find in the minds of men such a universal belief, as is given to it in the whole church, and among so many different nations. The more this adorable mystery appears monstrous, (suffer the expression of the enemies of our faith,) the more it shocks human reason, the more the imagination mutinies against it, the more obscure, incomprehensible, and impenetrable it is, the less credible is it that it should naturally insinuate itself into the minds and hearts of all Christians of so many and so distant countries.’ The writer, from whom this extract is made, then proceeds, in the unwary simplicity of his zeal, to say,—‘If Jesus Christ did not watch over his church, the number of Unitarians would quickly exceed that of the orthodox Christians ; for there is nothing in the sentiments of these heretics, that does not enter naturally into the mind.’

It is perhaps scarcely worth the while, at this day, to point out the imperfections of the wonderful argument, on which these writers place such fond reliance, and which they seem to consider as so singularly ingenious. Yet a remark or two may not be out of place. Passing by the trifling mistake in the assumption of an universal belief in the orthodox doctrine of the trinity,—we would merely ask them if they would apply the same mode of reasoning to all the errors and absurdities, which sprung up and spread widely after the apostolic age ; for it might unquestionably be so applied, with as much propriety and effect. The doctrine of transubstantiation, for instance, in some shape, was for ages almost universally re-

ceived in christendom. Now how is it possible, that men could ever have invented a notion, which not only confounds and shocks reason, but absolutely contradicts the senses? They must have derived it from the scriptures, the papist might say,—for had not the apostles taught and transmitted it to their successors, it is too monstrous ever to have entered into men's minds. And with the more plausibility might he urge this argument, since he can quote the very words of scripture, in their literal sense, in behalf of his opinion, without being obliged to resort to construction or inference,—an advantage which the trinitarian cannot pretend to claim. Indeed, there is no kind of extravagance in religious speculation, to which this principle would not afford ample protection; for we have only to draw conclusions, according to our own good will and pleasure, from the scriptures, and the more irrational and inconceivable they are, the more probable we may suppose it to be, that they are of divine origin.

Besides, so far is it from being incredible that men should invent strange doctrines in religion, at which 'reason stands aghast,' that these are precisely the things, which they are most likely to invent. One must have been a very superficial or careless observer, not to have learned, that mankind are by no means disposed to be satisfied with the plain, direct, intelligible instructions of christianity, but are ever seeking something more refined, curious, and mystical. Ecclesiastical history will tell us that, from the time when the fathers of the church mingled with the truths of the Gospel the philosophical crudities and speculations, which they brought with them from the schools, down to the present day, there has been a prevalent and strong passion for mystery in religion, for something more imposing than the simplicity of scriptural christianity. The lovers of dark, shadowy, indistinct statements and theories in scriptural things, under various forms, have always outnumbered those, who have deemed clearness and consistency essential to the evidence and the value of their belief. The imagination finds a pleasant excitement in hovering round a subject, to which obscurity has given an appearance of grandeur, however false.—'Atque omne ignotum pro magnifico est.'—There is much more of what may be called *poetical effect* in mysterious than in rational religion; more of that indefinite something, which feeds and gratifies the love of the marvellous, and the

same reason may be given for it, which Waller gave to king Charles for having written better poetry in praise of Cromwell than of him. 'Poets, Sir, succeed better in fiction, than in truth.' And then this taste for the wonderful and the incomprehensible in religion is well adapted, in many instances, to give scope to that very pride of wisdom, which it professes to humble and to extinguish; for certainly there are not wanting those, with whom to be wiser than others is only to be more unintelligible; and in the same degree in which a doctrine is inexplicable, it forms the better subject for theories, and schemes, and systems. Nowhere does the vanity of speculation find a more busy scene of action, than on topics, in which there is as much darkness and incongruity on the one side, as on the other; and this, we think, might be eminently illustrated by the history of some theological disputes. On the other hand, there are many, who think it no mean merit to sacrifice reason to faith, and deem themselves to have performed a praiseworthy service, an act of moral worth, when they have prostrated their understanding before their religion. Now this disposition, which from these and other causes has always been so general in the christian world, the instructions of our Saviour have no tendency to nourish or encourage; for it is one of their most striking traits, that they have none of the incongruities, or of the parade of obscurity, which captivate the imagination, while they confound the understanding. They are more remarkable for nothing perhaps, than for beautiful simplicity, and for meeting the intellect and the feelings of man in a forthright course. They bring the most solemn truths,—truths concerning God and futurity, and the relation in which man stands to his Creator and Redeemer,—directly to the mind and heart, in all their plainness and power, without turning aside to amuse or perplex us with paradoxical and half revealed doctrines. They are full of that practical and earnest character, which, least of all things, savours of the mystical spirit; and in them every thing is brought to bear in the shortest way on those awful and momentous topics, which constituted the great objects of the Saviour's heavenly mission. It will readily be perceived, that all this is far from being adapted to flatter and employ the passion for the marvellous and the inexplicable; and accordingly men have turned away from the simplicity of the Gospel, and have been better pleased with idols, which their

own hands have made. Instead, therefore, of its being impossible for mankind to have invented doctrines appalling to reason and defying explanation, these are the very subjects to invite and exercise their invention. Their rational faith might be fixed, and their moral affections moved and sanctified by the plain and direct instructions of Jesus ; but in them their invention finds no room to act, and it is therefore forced out to seek its objects elsewhere. It has found them ; and one might say beforehand, without knowing how the fact stood, that the doctrine of the trinity and some of its fellow doctrines, were precisely such notions as human ingenuity would be busy in framing and recommending, either creating them wholly from its own resources, and then pressing scripture to their support, or founding them on unjustifiable interpretations of an obscure passage, which occurs here and there in the sacred writings. Indeed with so little truth can it be said that men are not ready to invent and cherish strange and startling opinions, that on the contrary, one of the grèatest apprehensions we have sometimes entertained, as to the rapidity of the spread of Unitarianism is, that it does not carry with it the materials for satisfying that craving appetite for mystery, which has been found to prevail so generally under christianity, as well as under other religions.

The attempt, to which we have now adverted, of converting to the defence and recommendation of a doctrine what seemed to be a formidable objection to it, might be deemed a piece of good generalship, were it not so easily exposed. It is in a spirit kindred to that of the following curious sentences from Sir Thomas Brown's '*Religio Medici*,' concerning which one is left in doubt, whether they were written with the sneer of irony, or in the honest weakness of enthusiasm. 'Methinks there be not impossibilities enough in religion for an active faith. I love to lose myself in a mystery, and to pursue my reason to an *O Altitudo*. I can answer all the objections of Satan and my rebellious reason, with that odd resolution I learned out of Tertullian,—'certum est, quia impossibile est.' This I think is no vulgar part of faith, to believe a thing not only above, but contrary to reason, and against the arguments of our proper senses.

THE BEGINNING AND PERFECTION OF THE GOSPEL.

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It was the saying of an eminent theologian,* who wrote a hundred years ago, that theology, like the art of the statuary, must reach its perfection, not by adding but by chipping away. 'As much of the material must be taken off,' he says, 'as is useless or out of proportion, till what remains may be the new man sculptured according to the divine image.' This description may need some explanation; but when understood, conveys a very beautiful and important truth. It must not be suspected to imply that any thing need be taken off from the written word, or that the fulness of the sacred law and promise is ever to be diminished, or that there is any thing superfluous or out of shape in the form of our religion, as it was seen by the gifted mind of our Lord and Saviour. To suppose either of these would be to mistake greatly his intention. He means only, that the testimony of our faith will grow simpler as it is better understood; that it is to attain to its glory, not by new accumulations of human system-making and tradition, but by the removal of those which now cleave to it; that in order to correspond to that faultless model, of which its author has given us the idea, it must gradually part with much that now stands connected with it; and that the effect of the progress of intelligence will be to reduce it to its own proper and perfect symmetry.

In the last number, the beginning of the Gospel was represented as imperfect, whatever point we assume as that beginning. Let us now try to define what the perfection is, to which it is continually looking forward and which it is designed at last to reach.

It may not be necessary to repeat,—but on such a subject it is impossible to be too explicit, or too cautious against being misunderstood,—that when our religion is spoken of as having not yet arrived at its perfection, this is said not of its nature and character, but of its developement and our apprehensions of it;—not of what it is in its essence, but of what it appears to us and accomplishes among us. We must consider it as seen by Jesus in its full light and excellence; but it is not

* Turretin.

seen so now by his followers. To him it was the divine gift, which they have failed to use and estimate aright; the revealed instruction, which they have been dull in comprehending; the mighty influence which they have been slow to feel and to spread; the glorious *ideal* which they have never realized. He received it as the direct commandment, and promise, and manifestation of the Father; and we receive it out of ancient records, and the corruptions of centuries. He beheld it in the spirit, while we must learn of it through the letter. He conceived it in its whole beautiful simplicity, which has been allowed so long to be encumbered and concealed; and in its abundant blessings, of which the world has so long deprived itself, through unworthiness; and he discerned with a prophetic eye its holy triumphs, for which we must wait and pray.

This view of the subject is rational and safe. It teaches in the first place what the perfection of Christianity is not, and thus exposes several errors relating to it, which even at the present day find place and advocates. That perfection is not to be sought for in any abstruse theories, or mystical interpretations, or any new and preternatural enlightening from the spirit of truth. There are some, who think that it is to be attained by extraordinary means and a special influence, and they are expecting some inexplicable flash and feeling of conviction to be afforded them from heaven. Others imagine it to be locked up in the words of the bible, and are groping among all the dreaming fancies of superstition for some key that shall open to them the whole. Some are even giving heed to the pretensions of a Swedish visionary, claiming to be the bearer from God of a new revelation to reveal the past one. These extravagancies of credulity are owing to the false estimate which is so general of the nature and uses of the holy scriptures; as if they were really written by the hand of the Almighty, and the essence of religion were left to be extracted from them alone and forever. On the contrary they are but witnesses and helps for us. It is as such wholly that we are to prize them, and as such we cannot prize them too much. They are our vouchers for the most important facts in the history of man and of his religious improvement, and are intended to assist us in discovering and possessing 'the mind of Christ.'

This account ought not to seem to any to be too loose, more than liberal and dangerous. It is serious, it is useful; it will help

to secure us against unbelief as well as against zealotry ; for what source of scepticism has sent out its troubled streams so widely as the idea that revelation is the very same thing with the documents that tell us of it, and has its safety utterly dependent on the works that from time to time have been thrown up about it ; that it lives in each part of a long series and accumulation of recorded opinion and testimony, and is answerable with its life at every point of the complicated whole ? What has opened to the enemies of religion so broad a ground of triumph as the custom of its friends to contend about sentences and paragraphs, as if all faith was involved in them, and to speak of the Almighty as if he had written a book on perishable parchment ? This is not undervaluing the scriptures. God forbid that we should do so ! It is vindicating them rather. It is giving them their own station, and it is a high one, among the oracles of sacred instruction. It is showing them as human means for an intelligible purpose, for the most important and admirable of purposes, and as such inestimable. Try to make them more than this, and you bring them into contempt, and you open through them a tide of superstitions without end. They contain the record of great events and momentous disclosures and promises, resting on the authority of a divine teacher ; and as such they take the ground of testimony. They contain, too, the treasures of a various wisdom, which are to be estimated according to their respective values ; according as they are in harmony with that supreme and original law of reason and the soul, ' which is not so much a written as an inbred law ; which we have not learned, received, read, but from nature herself apprehended, drawn up, drank in ; to which we were not educated, but constituted ; not trained, but destined.'*

All that has now been offered has a close connexion with the question proposed to be answered, and in fact leads us to the conclusion we are seeking. If Christianity does not consist in the writings which only testify of it, its perfection is not to be found in any arrangement of words into theories and systems. What remains, then, but to look for it in the thorough understanding and general prevalence of its spirit ? It is the spirit that gives life, the spirit that bears witness, the spirit that sanctifies. It is the spirit of his Son which God sends into the heart, crying, Father ! This is to the christian what the orac-

* Cicero.

ular breast-plate was to the Jewish dispensation,—its Urim and Thummim, its light and perfection.

And what is this spirit? We answer first in the words of a prophet, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, of counsel and knowledge. The Comforter that Jesus promised and God sent down is TRUTH. Here we have instruction with clearness and authority, on subjects of the most immediate and the deepest interest to us, to which no one who reflects, no one who looks about him or before him as a moral being, can be indifferent ;—subjects, on which we need the hand of a heavenly guide because they are vast and confound us, and a ray from the Father's brightness because they are often clouded by our nature's imperfections, and have often lain hidden from its needs. Here we are directed how to use our reason and our affections with respect to our Maker, and are shown the relations in which we stand to Him and the service that he requires and the recompenses that we may expect. Our views of these things are confirmed, and cleared, and expanded by the representations of the gospel ; and as the gospel becomes better known, purified from its corruptions, and acknowledged in its power, they will grow yet more distinct and glorious. There is no limit set to our progress in this quiet and elevated wisdom, but the undetermined one of the human mind itself. 'Then shall we know, while we follow on to know, the Lord.' It is not of doctrines that are merely speculative, that are unintelligible, or of no personal use if understood, that our religion in its purity makes any boast ; it is not with disputable opinions and verbal subtilties that it feels at all concerned ; they are no new and strange principles which it comes to set up among mankind. In a plain speech is its delight, and in simple though sublime realities. It is its highest use and praise to confirm what the wisest and best of every generation have loved to believe and ventured to hope. It does not profess to initiate us into any solemn mysteries. Such have always belonged only to the ignorant who might need them, or to the wiser who would keep them in that need ; and how remote was all this from the teaching of him, who spoke in the full light and free air, and addressed alike all who came to him, and drew instruction from the field-flowers and the small birds of heaven ! He does not turn our minds to what is too indistinct for them to perceive, or too abstruse for

them to feel. He throws out the whole glow of his spirit on the paternal character of God, and the duties and hopes of his children. Will not this be discerned one day to be his great and only object, when the peculiarities that stamped themselves on his own age, and all the systems of after devising, shall be disregarded together? Then if men will still hate and slay each other, they will not at least do so for differences of faith; and if it will not be that wars cease to the ends of the earth, it will yet be something, that the venerable name of religion will not be 'taken to a falsehood,' and made to furnish the watchword and sanctify the carnage.

Again—the perfection of 'the word of Christ' is in an humble piety and confidence towards God. While it teaches us much of the ways and purposes of our heavenly Father, it also teaches, that much must remain hidden and impenetrable; and that equally what we know and what we cannot know should inspire within us the dispositions of submissiveness and trust. All that it discloses is full of assurance, and before all that is veiled it bids us adore. That we should feel this assurance, and that we should be sensible of this obligation to confide, the gospel has given us its pure and noble views of the Divine Being, of his mercy, wisdom and truth. In proportion as from off these views all the errors of artificial divinity,—whether belonging to the first century or to the nineteenth—are scattered like mists and shadows, and in proportion as the minds and hearts of men receive the influence of the returning splendor, our faith is on its way to its consummation. But what a long distance is yet before it! Nothing has been more strangely and variously mistaken than the nature of piety, and under many of its false forms nothing more wild and disastrous than its effects. It has been made to consist in every kind of mental disorder, and been expressed by every abomination. With how many among ourselves it is a gloomy austerity or an unnatural fervor! Some place it in a servile fear, and some in a glowing zeal; some in a melancholy renouncing of this world, and some in the anticipated raptures of a world to come; some in ordinances without, and some in the most questionable impressions within. With how many it is but a passion, and with how many but a pretence! True piety answers to none of these descriptions. It is the silent homage of the soul to its Creator. It is the spirit of praise and reliance;—of praise

that is never weary and reliance that neither wavers nor repines. It is the habit of acknowledging in all things the Lord of all, of committing ourselves to his keeping, seeking his help, rejoicing in his rule and hoping in his mercy. What might not be expected for mankind, if a principle like this should everywhere spread itself over their actions, and reign in their hearts?

Moral obedience is the perfection of Christ's word; and all separate from this is but as its beginning, its means, its preparation. 'God,' said Peter to the multitude at Jerusalem, 'having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.' Here is the point, to which all the doctrines and sanctions of the gospel have chief respect. Its truths are for the meek, and its rewards for the faithful. Love that devises no evil, righteousness that commits none, the moral courage that fears none—these are its dispositions. Industry and contentment and peace and every duty and the most blessed hopes,—these are its fruits. It has no changes to produce, no effects to accomplish, independently of ourselves. Its work is no mystical efficacy. It is on the earth, and not on worlds beyond us; on our own hearts, and not on the counsels of heaven; on the generations to come, and not on those which have perished, or are now passing away without the knowledge of it. Its truths are profitable but to those who will embrace them, its consolations are availing but to those who will secure them, its ransoms are paid but for those who will win them. It has done nothing for a single soul that breathes, never can do anything for it, except by making it better. Here is the succour it offers, and here rests all the deliverance it brings. Let Christians remember that with all their light and privileges there is one ground of decision common to them and to the heathen, in the sight of the impartial One. It is, 'in every country he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted of Him.'

THE CHRISTIAN SPECTATOR ON MISSIONS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CHRISTIAN EXAMINER.

SIR,

Notice was taken some weeks ago in the *Christian Register*, of the sarcastic style of certain articles lately published in the *Christian Spectator*. This induced me to look into the

December number of that work, in which I perused with great interest a review of Dr Ware's Correspondence with Mr Adam, the Appeal to Liberal Christians for the Cause of Christianity in India, and two other pamphlets on the subject of missions. I presume this was one of the articles referred to in the Register. As I read it, I thought it worth answering; for it was written, I found, with considerable eloquence, and not a little skill; and as to sarcasm and ridicule, Sir, if Unitarians say or do any thing which seems to justify that kind of notice, why, let it be ridiculed, I say; we do not often suffer the mistakes of our opponents to escape, without sending after them an arrow or two from the quiver of satire; and it is very natural that they should claim a shot in return, when they see an occasion, and very fair that they should have it, too; and it must furthermore be a pretty poor cause which will not stand a few hits, and an amazingly good one, which is not sometimes exposed to them.

The course pursued in that review is just such a one as might have been expected. The writer begins by asserting, that the subject of foreign missions is evidently an embarrassing one to the 'leaders of Unitarianism;' and that their inaction in that great cause, notwithstanding their numbers and influence and 'overweening pretensions,' is a peculiarity in their character, which has attracted the notice and strong animadversion of their neighbours. He goes on to say that for a long period they maintained a silence on this subject, as convenient as it was dignified; or if the silence was ever broken, it was by the expression of contempt. But in an evil day, for them, a missionary at Calcutta disavowed the doctrine of the Trinity, and a native Bramin renounced idolatry, and published a system of pure Deism to his countrymen; and in a still more evil day, the voice of Mr Adam came over the waters to his brethren in America. The temptation took effect; there was a stir in the camp; columns were written in the newspapers, and articles in the magazines; the time of inaction was declared to be past, and Unitarians were called on to engage in the work of foreign missions. By and by came out the Correspondence between Dr Ware and Mr Adam and Rammohun Roy; then a society for *obtaining information*; then another pamphlet; and then—and then—the pamphlets went comfortably to sleep on the shelves of the pamphlet-mongers. The reviewer next sets

forth the essential coldness of Unitarianism, and its remarkable likeness to a palace of ice, which in the very act of becoming warm melts away and is destroyed. He therefore prophesies, that if Unitarians should ever grow enthusiastic enough to send out missionaries to the heathen, the effort, from its very nature, will bring them back to the good old fervent doctrines of trinity, total depravity and atonement; and he further foresees and foretells, from the same high ground, that the author of the *Appeal* will shortly become an orthodox man.

Now, Sir, I will not say that this is all true, but I repeat that it is all fair; and I do not doubt that the reviewer, with the prejudices and piques of his party about him, thought that it was true.

In the remarks which I am about to offer on this subject, it is not impossible that I may occasionally offend all parties, friends and foes. I assume not to be the organ or interpreter of any denomination, but merely to utter my own opinions, for which no one is answerable but myself; and though I cannot pretend to be deeply versed in missionary affairs, I have not let them pass without some attention, or without devoting to the general questions involved in them, many hours of serious thought. If I fall into any mistakes, I shall be happy to see them rectified. If I make any admissions unfavorable to the cause which I have most at heart, I must be content to bear the triumph of one side, and the blame of the other.

The topics discussed in the review, will lead me to speak, first, of the real ability of Unitarians to support foreign missions, and, secondly, of the success which has attended the orthodox missionaries. Then, perhaps, I shall take up some of the miscellaneous items of the review.

And in the first place, Sir, I hold that the reviewer has altogether mistaken and misrepresented the power, influence, and resources of Unitarianism at the present day. He calls us 'a denomination possessing vast resources, and commanding the most powerful instruments of moral influence; a denomination, with all the energy and enthusiasm of its youth and rapid advancement.' We will consider for a moment what these vast resources are. Leaving Massachusetts, for the present, out of the question, let us take a glance at the condition of Unitarianism in other parts of our country.

Beginning at Maine, we find one flourishing congregation in Portland. Two or three others are scattered through the state, small and unimportant. In New Hampshire the case is very similar; one large society in Portsmouth, and here and there a small one, as in Keene and Amherst. In Vermont I am acquainted with but one avowedly antitrinitarian society, and that is in Burlington. In Rhode Island there is one. In Connecticut there is one, and quite a small one. In New York, the gigantic state of New York, there is one. In New Jersey there is not one, that I know of; Princeton, like a kind of Rome, I suppose, awes heresy into nothingness. In Pennsylvania, there are two or three small ones, just strong enough to hold themselves together, and two or three more, hardly strong enough for that. In Ohio, not one. In Delaware, not one. In Maryland, one, in the city of Baltimore; formerly in prosperity, now in adversity, and obliged to borrow money to save their beautiful church from the hammer; never large. In the District of Columbia, one. In Virginia, not one. In North Carolina, not one. In South Carolina, one. In Georgia, Kentucky, Tennessee, Indiana, Missouri, &c. &c. not one.

There are in several of these states, congregations who *have been called Unitarian*; and so far as their discarding the doctrine of the trinity entitles them to the appellation, they deserve it. But they have little or no effective sympathy with us; they would rather, I believe, decline any cooperation with us; their teachers may be regarded as missionaries themselves among a semi-civilized people; and they cannot be charged with a want of zeal or devotedness, in which qualities they are left behind by none, and for the exercise of which they have ample occasion at home.

I do not intend, nor by any means wish to deny, that scattered through the country, we may number many single names of respectability and influence on our side. But they are insulated; they cannot meet with us; they cannot be reached by us, nor be made useful in a common cause.

Here I pause, and ask, where are the vast resources of American Unitarianism? Are they in those parts of New-England, where a Unitarian minister would be obliged to ride thirty, forty, fifty miles to exchange with a brother Unitarian? Are they in the one almost unobservable handful in the London of the new world? Can they be found in the plain little church at

Philadelphia, or among the untenanted pews of the splendid one at Baltimore? Or are they to be gathered from the log-houses of those irregular brethren at the west, of whose existence we are chiefly informed by report? Vast resources, Sir! the phrase is ridiculous to the ears of one, who knows, that within the last four years, applications have been made at Boston, from Baltimore, from Washington, from Harrisburg, and other places, for assistance to enable the Unitarians there to build or to retain their houses of worship; to enable them to put a roof over their heads, or keep over them one which was already erected. The optics of the reviewer must have been wonderfully dilated, and dilated by fear, perchance, when he saw the vision of these vast resources. For ourselves, we have never laid claim to them, nor dreamed of them; or if we have, it has been all a dream. How a man would be stared at, or smiled at, who should talk, south of Long Island Sound, or west of Connecticut river, of the vast resources of Unitarianism!

I complain not of the nakedness of our land, nor do I care who spies it out. Both our strength and our weakness are open to inspection, and truth is better than boasting. Neither do I despair at our ill success, and mourn over our gloomy prospects. On the contrary, I think that our success has been remarkable, and that our prospects are cheerful and encouraging. When I consider how little time has elapsed, since an objection to the chief doctrines of orthodoxy could not be whispered safely; when I consider how fond mankind are of mystery, how generally dissatisfied they are with simplicity, and how averse to make reason the interpreter of religion, I am disposed to triumph in the diffusion of liberal sentiments, and to anticipate with confidence their further progress. But the imagination of our vast resources never for a moment entered my head. They were left to be imagined by the reviewer; by a man, who knows that in the whole of his own populous state, there is but a solitary Sabbath-bell, which calls together the worshippers of the One God; who knows that the whole banded power of the country is orthodox; that all the institutions for religious education in the country, with a single exception, are decidedly, and some of them assumingly, popishly orthodox;—I beg pardon of the Catholics, I do not mean them;—yes, by a man who cannot travel toward any point of the compass, without being surrounded by orthodox believers, orthodox manners, and orthodox exclusiveness.

But I am now ready to speak of the Unitarian resources of Massachusetts, where there is doubtless more Unitarianism than in any other part of the United States. Unitarian societies, more or less flourishing, exist in almost every county, growing more frequent as Boston is approached, the nucleus and headquarters of American Unitarianism. I am not aware of the exact number of these societies, but am quite ready to confess, that, if they could be brought to act on any point, they would be sufficiently numerous and wealthy to effect something of consequence. Why then are they not brought to act on the subject of foreign missions? Is it because Unitarianism is, as the reviewer says it is, essentially cold? No; but the short answer is, because Unitarianism is not heartily and intelligently embraced by one half of these societies, nor by one third of the members of the other half. This is the chief reason of our seeming remissness, and it needs some comment.

There cannot be mentioned a more palpable fact, than that our country societies, in general, are only Unitarian in the following respects; they cannot believe the doctrine of the Trinity, nor sympathize cordially with Trinitarians; they take the *Examiner*, perhaps, instead of the *Spectator*, and the *Register* instead of the *Recorder*; when they want a minister, they send to Cambridge instead of Andover, and when they settle him, a Unitarian and not a Trinitarian brother gives him the right hand of fellowship. And yet he must seldom preach to them liberal doctrine; they are afraid of it, and afraid because they are but half informed; they are resolved not to be Trinitarians, but they are not resolved what they are, nor what they ought to be, in the way of doctrine, for in the way of character they are pious and good. Then there are always some few in a society, very respectable and very fearful, whom the minister is cautioned not to shock or offend, by exhibiting any stronger light than the glimmerings by which they walk, and with which they are contented; and so, because two or three must not be shocked, none must be instructed. Surrounded by this timidity, the minister often grows timid himself; keeps to one style of preaching and one round of subjects, and neither excites nor is excited to inquiry, decision and exertion.

Much of this is also true of the Unitarian societies in Boston. I can remember the time, and I am not old, when, though Boston was full of Unitarian sentiment and feeling, there was no open profession of it. A dead silence was maintained in

the pulpit on doctrinal subjects—a silence which was not disturbed by the press. Then came the Unitarian controversy, and people read it for a while, and a few of the ministers ventured to preach at intervals on the strict unity of God, and converts were made, and eight or nine of our churches were content to go on under the designation of Unitarian churches, though many and loud were the protests against the name. But the name was taken with tolerable unanimity; the utter dismission of orthodox doctrines from the pulpits followed, and the ministers were permitted to preach the plain morality of the Gospel. This would have been very well, if they had been permitted to preach any thing else; but they were not. People were tired of the controversy; some, because they thought they were completely masters of it, and some, because they never liked it. They were called Unitarians, and that was enough; they desired to hear no more about the matter. Controversy excited bad passions, and hurt the temper; the precepts of the Gospel were the rules of life, and why should they be troubled with doctrines and questions, which only ministered to strife, and not to edification? This disposition had been in a great degree fostered by their own champions. No Unitarian pamphlet could be written, without being prefaced by a deprecation of the evils of controversy, and an expression of the writer's deep sorrow that he had been drawn for a moment from the retreats of peace, and dragged into the thorny paths of disputation; and then would follow a peroration concerning the exquisite loveliness of christian charity, and the immense advantages of letting one another alone. In all this there was certainly much truth; and the tenderness of giving offence on the rational side, contrasted advantageously with the first outpourings of orthodox arrogance and denunciation. It looked amiable, and it manifested amiable feelings. But these dispositions were carried to excess, and knew no limitations, exceptions, or circumstances. For my part, I do not see why a man should feel so extremely uneasy, on taking up his pen to expose what he believes to be false, or defend what he believes to be true; and though I am willing to allow that the morality of the Gospel is of paramount importance, I am not ready to grant that it has no doctrines, or that having them, its ministers are not bound to preach them, at proper times and with due discretion. These, however, were not, nor are they now, the prevalent opinions; and the consequence of those other opin-

ions is, that the old silence is maintained, though with a different character; that the people, though satisfied with ministers of the Unitarian persuasion, and resolved to have no other, are generally unwilling to hear Unitarianism explained or defended, and are therefore not interested in it, nor well versed in its principles; and that those who wish to be informed are seldom gratified, because there are so many who know everything, or desire to know nothing.

In such a state of things, I ask again, where are the vast resources of Unitarianism? How can there be resources, where there is so little of an instructed and lively interest? The resources are not vast, nor even respectable. When a purpose, strictly Unitarian, is to be accomplished, they into whose hands it is committed, know full well, that the interest in Unitarianism, as such, is small indeed, and that its resources are soon exhausted.

Nor is this to be wondered at. Great changes are gradually effected; and such a thorough and general acquaintance with the principles of rational religion, as alone can produce a general and enlightened zeal for those principles, is not yet to be looked for. But I feel confident in saying, that an acquaintance with Unitarianism, and a corresponding zeal for it, are rapidly increasing, and that their fruits will ripen continually; and I rejoice in turning from the indifference of some, to the engagedness of others, to whose exertions, under Providence, the progress of simple Christianity is mainly indebted, and who are not sparing of their time nor their means in promoting those plans of improvement and benevolence, which are laid before the Unitarian public. It is to this small number that we owe the efforts which have been made and are still making for the support and usefulness of the Evangelical Missionary Society, the Theological School at Cambridge, the American Unitarian Association, and other institutions which might be named. And it is this small number, let me observe, Sir, who, not satisfied with what has been done at home, are turning their attention, and striving to turn the attention of others, to the subject of foreign missions. How is this fact reconcilable with the palace of ice theory? Here are men, in whom knowledge produces zeal. Here are men, who, the more firmly they become grounded in the principles of Unitarianism, are the more incited to diffuse religion; and who are repulsed in their exertions and applications, not by those who are well acquainted with the ration-

al faith, and settled in it by a course of study and thought, but by those who are not so well acquainted with it, nor settled in it. I can account for this in no other way than by making Unitarianism the fire and not the ice. The fire may be but a small one, but it is not on that account ice. The number of thorough Unitarians may be scanty, but if that scanty number is the most zealous, the very last inference which I should think of drawing from the circumstance, would be—that Unitarianism is essentially cold. Nevertheless, I would not be unjust to that paragraph of the reviewer's concerning the palace of ice. It was very prettily interspersed with poetry, and sounded well.

I will mention another fact, Mr Editor, which, at the same time that it will be another index to the extent of our resources, will give rise to the question, where are our missionaries to the heathen to come from? There is but one institution at present in our country, to which we can look for educated ministers of our persuasion. And what is the number of students at the Theological Institution in Cambridge? I have not the catalogue before me, but if my memory serves me, it is about thirty. And how many candidates for the ministry? About ten. Yes, Sir, about ten candidates, to supply the demands of the United States, and the East Indies! ten candidates to fill our vacant pulpits at home, and diffuse Unitarian Christianity through the distant regions of the earth!

There is yet another fact connected with this subject. Some time ago, a sum of money was asked, for the erection of a building to accommodate the theological students at Cambridge, and to increase the means of instruction there. Generous donations were made, but the sum is not yet raised. We have not been able to obtain money enough to pay for a house, and to found a professorship. Does the reviewer suppose, that from the overflowing plenitude of our resources, we would not provide for our own instructors?

If I were disposed retort on the reviewer, for some of his ungentle charges, I should tell him, that though he might not be aware of the circumstance, we did in reality send missionaries among the *heathen*. I should tell him, that a clergyman of our denomination, went, not long ago, to a village within fifty miles of Boston, and preached there, and many joined themselves to him. One of this number was a lawyer. From that moment the orthodox refused to consult him, his business declined, and he was obliged to leave the place. The physician was

another. The sick would not send for him, and he went away. Some traders adopted the new doctrine ; their stores were deserted, and they failed. These things, when I was told of them, put me strongly in mind of the *loss of caste* in India ; and I have not yet settled the question, which people needed conversion the most, those orthodox inhabitants of that village, or the poor heathen of Hindostan. And that village is not alone.

And now I will speak of the success of the orthodox missionaries abroad. On this subject I shall say but a few words. It is unnecessary that I should speak on it long. The orthodox magazines teem with inflated accounts of foreign success, and they who are inquisitive may read them through, and they who are credulous may believe them to the letter. Notwithstanding their length and minuteness, I cannot find that much has been done. The Abbe Dubois, Mr Adam, and other missionaries, confess that little or nothing has been done. The *Quarterly Review*, which is an anti-unitarian work, says that nothing has been done ; and in the number for last December, presents such a view of the labours of Mr and Mrs Judson, as impresses us with an idea of the honesty and zeal of that couple, but not of their good sense or their good success. Something like this might be said of almost all the missionaries who have gone to the east. They have gone there under the conviction, that all the Hindoos, Burmese, &c. are destined to eternal punishment, except those whom they can turn to Christianity and save. Hence in a great measure their zeal ; and hence the loud and long proclamations, when there is a baptism ; and hence the broken speeches in broken English, which are retailed in biographies of little male and female converts, who repeat when they are sick, what they were taught when they were well ; and hence all the cant about missions on both sides of the great water, which has given a respectable part of the christian community a sickness, of which I am afraid it will be difficult to cure them. I do not hesitate to say, that next to our want of *resources*, the principal reason of our inactivity regarding missions, is one created by the orthodox themselves. Their language has been so unreasonable on this point, their cant has been so sickening, that it has turned away many a face from the real merits of the subject itself ; it has created a disgust, which has deafened many an ear to the voice of application, and kept back many a mind from calm and impartial inquiry.

In the Sandwich Islands, the missionaries have been truly successful. There is no reason to doubt, that they have very much changed the moral state of that part of the world for the better. To my mind this fact is pretty strong evidence, that little has been done in India. A voice of confidence and reality is heard from those islands, which is not heard from Calcutta or Serampore. There is a formidable array of names and numbers belonging to the India missions; but when you ask for what has been done, you are always referred to the Sandwich Islands. There seem to be more encouraging facts to be had for the asking, in that group, than can be gathered with care from the whole continent of Asia. I have no disposition to deny or to undervalue any good, that has been effected by missionaries any where; and I have no disposition to take all the boasting and swelling of the orthodox about them for sober history.

And here I feel myself bound to observe, that there are many excellent and reflecting Unitarians, who have come to a decided conclusion, that no great good has been brought to pass by missionaries in any quarter of the globe. They think that the experiment has been tried, and that it has failed, and that it may as well be abandoned. This is not my opinion; but they have a right to theirs. Far be it from me to say, that all well informed, and well meaning, and zealous Unitarians, are necessarily zealous for foreign missions. There are many such, who are persuaded that there is no call whatever for missions in the present state of the world. I suspect that neither I, nor the reviewer, may arraign and condemn those individuals at our tribunal, for not thinking as we do; and what the judgment of a far higher tribunal than ours will be, I am sure we have no right to declare.

In the course of this letter, I have advanced the following points. First, that for no object are Unitarian resources vast. Secondly, that the success of the missions of the orthodox has not been such as to warrant any dogmatism on their part. Thirdly, that the puerile manner in which missions and conversions have been represented to the public, have given many good and sensible persons such a distaste to the whole affair, that they do not hear it even mentioned with tolerable patience. Fourthly, that there are some who are opposed to missions, for the present, on principle, and after making what they consider sufficient investigation. Under these circumstances—and in

stating them I am not aware that I have been influenced by any motive but a single regard to the truth—under these circumstances, the best possible thing which those Unitarians, who were really interested in the cause of foreign missions, could have done, was, *to obtain information*; yes, in spite of the reviewer's sneer, I sincerely believe it was the best thing which they could have done. The only objection which I see to a 'Society for Obtaining Information respecting the State of Religion in India,' is, that its name cannot be pronounced in one breath, and that it looks somewhat awkwardly on the title page of a book. As to the object itself, considering how many thousands of dollars have been wasted in missionary undertakings, it was wise in those Unitarians not to hazard their small means, without first obtaining information, and such as could be depended on; and if the reviewer thinks they ought to have gone to work in the dark, blindly, and *without* information, I hope they will never adopt the reviewer's opinion.

I have left myself no room to pursue my intention of remarking on some other matters contained in the reviewer's performance; but he may hear from me again. In the mean time, I would recommend to him to ponder awhile on the last sentence of his own review. 'God bless the Moravians! And may he pour out on every church in his kingdom the spirit of the *simple, unpretending, noiseless* Moravians.' I have *italicised* three words, in order to guide the reviewer in his meditations.

Yours, &c.

A SEEKER.

Collections.

[The following extract, in which reference is made to the circumstances under which our forefathers left their native country, is taken from a piece published by John Milton, at London, in 1641, under the title, 'Of Reformation touching Church Discipline in England, and the causes that hitherto have hindered it: in two Books, written to a Friend.']

Amongst many secondary and accessary causes that support monarchy, these are not of least reckoning;*** the love of the subjects, the multitude and valour of the people, and store of treasure. In all these things hath the kingdom been of late sore weakened, and chiefly by the prelates. First, let any

man consider, that if any prince shall suffer under him a commission of authority to be exercised, till all the land groan and cry out, as against a whip of scorpions, whether this be not likely to lessen, and keel the affections of the subject. Next, what numbers of faithful and freeborn Englishmen, and good Christians, have been constrained to forsake their dearest home, their friends and kindred, whom nothing but the wide ocean, and the savage deserts of America, could hide and shelter from the fury of the bishops? O sir, if we could but see the shape of our dear mother England, as poets are wont to give a personal form to what they please, how would she appear, think ye, but in a mourning weed, with ashes upon her head, and tears abundantly flowing from her eyes, to behold so many of her children exposed at once, and thrust from things of dearest necessity, because their conscience could not assent to things which the bishops thought indifferent? What more binding than conscience? What more free than indifferency? Cruel then must that indifferency needs be, that shall violate the strict necessity of conscience; merciless and inhuman that free choice and liberty that shall break asunder the bonds of religion! Let the astrologer be dismayed at the portentous blaze of comets, and impressions in the air, as foretelling troubles and changes to states; I shall believe there cannot be a more ill-boding sign to a nation (God turn the omen from us!) than when the inhabitants, to avoid insufferable grievances at home, are enforced by heaps to forsake their native country.

How admirably does Milton, in what we next quote from the same piece, answer the ominous cries of the opposers of Unitarians and of some irresolute among themselves, who, as they see one after another of what we deem the theological errors of the day attempted to be removed, are continually exclaiming—'do not go too far!'—'where will you stop!'—as if in the work of reformation we *could* go too far, or as if we ought to stop *at all*, till every strong delusion, every mere device of the human understanding, or of the human passions, is utterly destroyed, and truth and goodness are all in all!

Here, 'he says,' I might have ended, but that some objections, which I have heard commonly flying about, press me to the endeavour of an answer. We must not run, they say, into sudden extremes. This is a fallacious rule, unless understood only of the

actions of virtue about things indifferent ; for if it be found that those two extremes be vice and virtue, falsehood and truth, the greater extremity of virtue and superlative truth we run into, the more virtuous and the more wise we become ; and he that, flying from degenerate and traditional corruption, fears to shoot himself too far into the meeting embraces of a divinely warranted reformation, had better not have run at all. And for the suddenness, it cannot be feared. * * * If it were sudden and swift, provided still it be from worse to better, certainly we ought to hie us from evil like a torrent, and rid ourselves of corrupt discipline, as we would shake fire out of our bosoms.

Speedy and vehement were the reformations of all the good kings of Judah, though the people had been nuzzled in idolatry ever so long before ; they feared not the bugbear danger, nor the lion in the way, that the sluggish and timorous politician thinks he sees. * * *

Let us not dally with God when he offers us a full blessing, to take as much of it as we think will serve our ends, and turn him back the rest upon his hands, lest in his anger he snatch all from us again.

Our next extract, which is equally worth the attention of these improving times with the last, is taken from Milton's work entitled, 'The Reason of Church Government urged against Prelaty.'

As for those many sects and divisions rumoured abroad to be amongst us, it is not hard to perceive, that they are partly the mere fictions and false alarms of the prelates, thereby to cast amazements and panic terrors into the hearts of weaker christians, that they should not venture to change the present deformity of the church, for fear of I know not what worse inconveniences. With the same objected fears and suspicions, we know that suble prelate Gardner sought to divert the reformation. It may suffice us to be taught by St Paul, that there must be sects for the manifesting of those that are soundhearted. These are but winds and flaws to try the floating vessel of our faith, whether it be stanch and sail well, whether our ballast be just, our anchorage and cable strong. By this is seen who lives by faith and certain knowledge, and who by credulity and the prevailing opinion of the age ; whose virtue is of an unchangeable grain, and whose of a slight wash. If God come to try our constancy, we ought not to shrink or stand the less firmly for

that, but pass on with more steadfast resolution to establish the truth, though it were through a lane of sects and heresies on each side. Other things men do to the glory of God ; but sects and errours, it seems, God suffers to be for the glory of good men, that the world may know and reverence their true fortitude and undaunted constancy in the truth. Let us not therefore make these things an incumbrance, or an excuse for our delay in reforming, which God sends us as an incitement to proceed with more honour and alacrity ; for if there were no opposition, where were the trial of an unfeigned goodness and magnanimity ? Virtue that wavers is not virtue, but vice revolted from itself, and after a while returning. The actions of just and pious men do not darken in their middle course ; but Solomon tells us, they are as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. But if we shall suffer the trifling doubts and jealousies of future sects to overcloud the fair beginnings of purposed reformation, let us rather fear that another proverb of the same wise man be not upbraided to us, that the way of the wicked is as darkness, they stumble at they know not what. If sects and schisms be turbulent in the unsettled estate of a church, while it lies under the amending hand, it best beseems our christian courage to think they are but the throes and pangs that go before the birth of reformation, and that the work itself is now in doing. For if we look but on the nature of elemental and mixed things, we know they cannot suffer any change of one kind or quality into another, without the struggle of contrarieties. And in things artificial, seldom any elegance is wrought without a superfluous waste and refuse in the transaction. No marble statue can be politely carved, no fair edifice built without almost as much rubbish and sweeping. Insomuch that even in the spiritual conflict of St Paul's conversion, there fell scales from his eyes, that were not perceived before. No wonder then in the reforming of a church, which is never brought to effect without the fierce encounter of truth and falsehood together, if, as it were the splinters and shards of so violent a jousting, there fall from between the shock many fond errours and fanatic opinions, which, when truth has the upper hand, and the reformation shall be perfected, will easily be rid out of the way, or kept so low, as that they shall be only the exercise of our knowledge, not the disturbance or interruption of our faith.

We copy the sentences below from the third chapter of the second book of the work last referred to, not only for their beauty, but for the lessons of practical wisdom they may teach us.

Truth, I know not how, hath this unhappiness fatal to her, ere she can come to the trial and inspection of the understanding; being to pass through many little wards and limits of the several affections and desires, she cannot shift it but must put on such colours and attire, as those pathetic handmaids of the soul please to lead her in to their queen; and if she find so much favour with them, they let her pass in her own likeness; if not, they bring her into the presence habited and coloured like a notorious falsehood. And contrary, when any falsehood comes that way, if they like the errand she brings, they are so artful to counterfeit the very shape and visage of truth, that the understanding, not being able to discern the fucus which these enchantresses with such cunning have laid upon the features sometimes of truth, sometimes of falsehood interchangeably, sentences for the most part one for the other at the first blush, according to the subtle imposture of these sensual mistresses, that keep the ports and passages between her and the object.

Poetry.

TO THE IVY.—BY MRS. HEMANS.

Oh! how could fancy crown with *thee*,
 In ancient days the God of wine,
 And bid thee at the banquet be
 Companion of the vine?
 Thy home, wild plant, is where each sound
 Of revelry hath long been o'er;
 Where song's full notes once peal'd around,
 But now are heard no more.

The Roman on his battle plains,
 Where kings before his eagles bent,
 Entwin'd thee with exulting strains,
 Around the victor's tent.

Yet there though fresh in glossy green
Triumphantly thy boughs might wave,
Better thou lov'st the silent scene,
Around the victor's grave.

Where sleep the sons of ages flown,
The bards and heroes of the past ;
Where through the halls of glory gone,
Murmurs the wintry blast ;
Where years are hastening to efface,
Each record of the grand and fair ;
Thou, in thy solitary grace,
Wreath of the tomb, art there !

Thou, o'er the shrines of fallen Gods,
On classic plains, dost mantling spread,
And veil the desolate abodes,
And cities of the dead.
Deserted palaces of kings,
Arches of triumph long o'erthrown,
And all once glorious earthly things
At length are thine alone.

Oh! many a temple, once sublime,
Beneath the blue Italian sky,
Hath nought of beauty left by time,
Save thy wild tapestry.
And rear'd midst crags and clouds, 'tis thine
To wave, where banners waved of yore,
O'er mouldering tow'rs by lonely Rhine,
Cresting the rocky shore.

High from the fields of air look down,
Those eyries of a vanish'd race ;
Homes of the mighty, whose renown
Hath passed and left no trace.
But thou art there, thy foliage bright
Unchang'd the mountain storm can brave ;—
Thou that wilt climb the loftiest height,
And deck the humblest grave !

The breathing forms of Parian stone,
That rise round grandeur's marble halls ;
The vivid hues by painting thrown
Rich o'er the glowing walls ;

Th' Acanthus on Corinthian fanes,
 In sculptur'd beauty waving fair ;—
 These perish all—and what remains ?
 Thou—thou alone art there !

'Tis still the same ; where'er we tread,
 The wrecks of human power we see,
 The marvels of all ages fled,
 Left to decay and thee.
 And still let man his fabrics rear,
 August in beauty, grace, and strength ;—
 Days pass—Thou Ivy never sear !—
 And all is thine at length !

THE REVELLERS.—BY THE SAME.

Ring, joyous chords ! yet again, again !
 A swifter still, and a wilder strain !
 They are here !—the fair face, and the careless heart,
 And stars shall wane ere the mirthful part.
 —But I met a dimly mournful glance,
 In a sudden turn of the flying dance ;
 I heard the tone of a heavy sigh,
 In a pause of the thrilling melody ;
 And it is not well, that Wo should breathe
 On the bright spring-flowers of the festal wreath ;
 —Ye that to Thought and Grief belong,
 Leave, leave the Hall of Song !

Ring, joyous chords !—but who art *thou*,
 With the shadowy locks o'er thy pale young brow,
 And the world of dreaming gloom that lies
 In the misty depths of thy soft dark eyes ?
 —Thou hast loved, fair girl, thou hast loved too well !
 Thou art mourning now o'er a broken spell,
 Thou hast poured thy heart's rich treasures forth,
 And art unrepaid for their priceless worth !
 —Mourn on !—yet come thou not *here* the while ;
 It is but a pain to see thee smile !
 —There is not a tone in our songs for thee,
 Home with thy sorrows flee !

Ring, joyous chords!—yet again, again!
—But what dost *thou* with the revel's train?
A silvery voice through the soft air floats,
But thou hast no part in the gladdening notes;
There are bright young faces that pass thee by,
But they fix no glance of thy wandering eye!
Away! there's a void in thy yearning breast,
Thou weary man! wilt thou here find rest?
Away! for thy thoughts from the scene have fled,
And the love of *thy* spirit is with the dead!
Thou art but more lone midst the sounds of mirth!—
Back to thy silent hearth!

Ring, joyous chords!—yet again, again!
A swifter still, and a wilder strain!
—But *thou*, though a reckless mien be thine,
And thy lip be crown'd with the foaming wine,
By the fitful bursts of thy laughter loud,
By thine eye's quick flash through its troubled cloud,
I know thee!—it is but the wakeful fear
Of a haunted bosom, that brings thee here!
I know thee!—thou fearest the lonely Night,
With her piercing stars, and her deep wind's might!
'There's a tone in her voice which thou fain would'st shun,
For it asks what the secret soul hath done!
And thou!—there's a dark weight on thine—away!
Back to thy home, and pray!

Ring, joyous chords!—yet again, again!
A swifter still, and a wilder strain!
And bring new wreaths!—We will banish all,
Save the free in heart, from our festive hall.
On through the maze of the fleet dance, on!
—But where are the young and the lovely?—gone!
Where are the brows with the fresh rose crown'd?
And the floating forms with the bright zone bound?
And the waving locks, and the flying feet,
That still should be where the mirthful meet?
—They are gone—they are fled—they are parted all!
Alas! the forsaken hall!

Review.

ART. II.—*Remarks on a late Article in the Wesleyan Journal.*

By a Member of the Charleston Unitarian Tract Society.
Charleston, S. C. 1825. 8vo. pp. 16.

WE are always happy to receive a pamphlet from certain hands in Charleston, because we are always sure that it will reward us well for the trouble of reading it; sure that it contains some original views, or, at least, some fresh and forcible illustrations of old ones. We have seldom seen more argument compressed into a small space, than in the sixteen pages now before us, and we doubt whether a better specimen of what theological controversy ought to be, could any where be found.

The piece is an answer to an article which appeared lately in the *Wesleyan Journal*, a work which is conducted with some ability, and which set out with more than common professions of liberality and charity. In what manner those professions were maintained in practice, may be judged of by the article in question.

“*Unitarian Antidote.* Unitarian principles, if true, shut all men out of heaven, by denying the Saviour’s Divine nature, and atonement; seeing All have sinned and are guilty before God. Rom. iii. 19. And a created being—can by no means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him. Psal. xlix. 7.

“Hebrews i. 6, 7, it is written, when he (the Father) bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, Let all the Angels of God worship him. * * * Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever. Hence Reason concludes that Christ is essentially God; or all the Angels of God (who disobey not his command) are idolaters.

“The oracles of God declare, All manner of sin and blasphemy (against the Father and the Son) shall be forgiven to men; but blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven. Hence Reason, ‘infallible Reason!’ infers, If either is greatest in the adorable Trinity, it is God the Holy Ghost.

“But greater or lesser in infinity is not; inferior Godhead shocks our sense; Jesus was inferior to the Father, as touching his manhood. John xiv. 28. He was a Son given and slain, intentionally, from the foundation of the world. Rev. xiii. 8. And the first born from the dead of every creature. Col. i. 15, 18.

“But our Redeemer from everlasting, Isa. lxiii. 16, had not the inferior name of Son. In the beginning was the Word, and

the Word was with God, from eternity ; and the Word, made flesh, was God, and dwelt among us. John i. 14 ; x. 30. And as it was in the beginning, so after his ascension, His Name is called the Word of God. Rev. xix. 13. He who is, and who was, and who cometh—He that liveth and was dead, and is alive for evermore, saith, I am Alpha, and Omega, the First, and the Last, the Lord God Almighty. Isa. xlv. 6 ; Rev. 1. 5. 8. 18.”

pp. 3, 4.

In consequence of this curious sample of orthodox text quoting, the author of the pamphlet addressed a letter to the editor of the *Journal*, requesting his permission to insert a defence, in the same publication which had harboured the attack, ‘ provided it should contain no bitter insinuation or harsh retort, but a simple statement of scriptural facts and sincere arguments.’

The editor took no notice of this communication, and the defence was published by the author in a separate form. Each position of the offending article is deliberately examined, and proved to be destitute of foundation, excepting the first, that ‘ all have sinned, and are guilty before God ;’ a truth which will be allowed by all. The perversion of the passage in the 49th Psalm, will be perceived by any one who will turn to the verse. It furnishes an opportunity to the writer, however, to express some happy thoughts on the general subject of *redemption*. These we pass over, and come to a paragraph, which contains a great deal of sound scripture criticism, not new indeed, but uttered with so much clearness, that the simplest can understand it, and with such vivacity of style, that they who are the most familiar with the controversy will nevertheless peruse it with interest.

‘ The next passage is as follows. “ Heb. i. 6, 7, it is written, when he (the Father) bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, let all the angels of God worship him.*** Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever. Hence reason concludes, that Christ is essentially God, or all the angels of God (who disobey not his commands) are idolaters.”

‘ No indeed. Reason concludes no such thing. By the way, I am glad to see my trinitarian brethen willing to appeal sometimes to reason. God forbid that we should ever place its authority *above* Scripture, but it is an excellent handmaid to discover the true sense of Scripture, and adopting it as such, I will now join issue with the writer before me. In this passage, then,

the fatal word, which has deluded our opponents, is, *worship*. They forget that its scriptural signification is not always the adoration which created beings owe to their Creator. In one of Christ's parables, a servant falls down and worships his *master*. (Matt. xviii. 26.) Surely not as the supreme being, but only as an object of deep fear and reverence. So in 1 Chron. xxix. 20, all the congregations worshipped the Lord and *the king*; i. e. "bowed down their heads," in token of legal obedience to the one, and religious awe to the other. That *worship* is said in Scripture to be due to Christ, can never therefore be adduced as a proof of his divinity; and we must always interpret the meaning of the word according to the passage where it occurs, and not according to a preconceived creed. Now, then, let us look at the passage in question, Heb. i. Here we find the apostle descanting on the *official character* of Jesus as the Messiah, not upon his metaphysical divine nature. Instead of confounding Jesus with Jehovah, he says, that God has spoken unto us *by his Son*, in the same way, (mark the very words of the Apostle, *in like manner*,) as he formerly did *by the Prophets*; he says, that God has *appointed* him heir of all things; he says, that Christ is the express *image* of God's person; (an image is generally inferior to the original;) he says, that he *was made* better than the angels; (this cannot be spoken of his human nature, since "man is created a little *lower* than the angels," but it refers to his official character as Messiah, which has been wrongly confounded with his person and nature, and thus caused so many disputes among Christians;) he says, that God has anointed him *above his fellows*, referring, I think, either to the angels or the prophets mentioned in this chapter; otherwise, I should be thankful to know what it means. Does all this phraseology lead us to suppose that Jesus can be the only true and adorable God? Far from it. By the angels being commanded to worship him, therefore, is only meant that as the message of Jesus to mankind was superior in value and importance to any thing that Jehovah had ever before transacted, by means of angels or any other instruments, for the welfare of mankind, so, their inferiority to him is represented by appropriate and expressive acts of reverence. To say, that worship *must* here mean supreme homage, is to assume the decision of the question by our own authority, to say what the context cannot warrant, and what the word in other places does not require. A single objection only remains on this point, and is noticed by the article under consideration. Jehovah is represented as saying to Jesus, "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever." Here, too, Unitari-

ans have laboured under an odium for understanding the word, *God*, in an inferior sense to the supreme Jehovah. I maintain, in the first place, that in order to make the verse consistent with the numerous expressions above cited, we are *compelled* to understand it in such an inferior sense. In the second place, this view of the passage is confirmed by the very next verse, where it is said, "therefore, God, even *THY GOD*, hath anointed thee," &c. Thus evidently making Jesus inferior to some other being. In the third place, our Saviour tells us that, according to Hebrew phraseology, those were called *gods* to whom the word of God came. See John x. 35. Thus he furnishes Unitarians with an irresistible argument out of his own mouth. But, in the fourth place, in order to see a reason, if possible, still more unanswerable, look back and see the 45th psalm, from which this very verse, *Thy throne, O God, &c.* is extracted. You will find the verse, not an address to Jehovah, but an address to the king of Israel. The Psalm begins thus; "My heart is inditing a good matter; I speak of the things which I have made *touching the king.*" And then the Psalmist proceeds throughout, in exact accordance with this design. In conformity with oriental hyperbole, he addresses the king by the title of *O God*;* because the authority, power, and prerogative of eastern kings, rendered them, as it were, gods upon earth. Here is no straining of passages—no forced interpretations. All is as plain as a child's first lesson to any one who will look at the psalm. The Jews of aftertimes regarded the whole composition as not only originally applicable to King Solomon; (see Rosenmuller's Commentary on this Psalm;) but as prophetic also of their Messiah. In just this light it was, that the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews most forcibly applied it. Unitarians acknowledge the felicity and correctness of the application. They receive Jesus as the true Messiah; they are willing, along with St. Paul, to pay him more regard, worship, or reverence, than to all the prophets, messengers or angels of God; they cannot conceive where the danger or the error of their principles lies, while they thus exalt the *official character* of Jesus as highly as their opponents do; and especially, they cannot comprehend how, in cherishing these sentiments, and favouring these views, and worship-

* 'The passage might very properly be translated, "God is thy throne," instead of "Thy throne, O God," &c. This would at once close the argument as to this verse. But I wish not to take advantage of it. Unitarianism is unaffected by either interpretation.'

ping the Father alone,* as the supreme and all-originating Spirit, they "shut themselves out of heaven." Is there not quite as much danger of such a fate to be apprehended for those, who, without any just or well considered cause, take up a hasty prejudice against what they incompletely understand, and consign some of the fairest characters in the community, and some of the best men who have ever lived, on account of a difference in the explication of ancient Jewish words and phrases, not only to an exclusion from the precincts of Christianity, but to the regions of eternal wo? pp. 8—10.

The examination of the article goes on with the same even and firm step, and is concluded thus.

'The article closes with a confused quotation from several separate passages of Scripture, all of which the writer applies to Christ, although in the Bible some are applied to the Father only, and others to his Son only as the *image* of the Father, or head over all things to his church. The following collocation is entirely unwarranted by Scripture. "He that liveth and was dead, and is alive for evermore, saith, I am Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last, the Lord God Almighty. Rev. i. 5. 8. 17." Now he who "was dead" *never said*, that he was the Lord God Almighty. The 8th versé of Rev. ch. first, I maintain, is spoken in the person of God the Father only, and is as follows; "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." Still farther, when Christ speaks in the book of Revelation, he *never* applies to himself the phrase from Isaiah, "who art, and who wast, and who art to come." That, as well as the title Lord God Almighty, is only applied to the Supreme Father. They both are always found together, and you will never find either of them in company with the expression, *he who was dead*. Thus see Rev. xi. 17; "saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power and hast reigned." Here the context contains no allusion whatever to the Son. See also Rev. xvi. 5. This distinction, so constantly observed by the author of the book in question, is too marked and too important to be dismissed without regard, and is a manifest proof, that the being, *who was dead*, was not, in John's opin-

* The hour cometh, and now is, when the *true* worshippers shall worship—whom? The Trinity? No! But the FATHER, in spirit and in truth. John iv. 23.

ion, the Lord God Almighty, nor the being whom Isaiah represents as who is, and who was, and who is to come. One objection more, however, is obvious in this connexion, and remains to be answered. Why are the titles Alpha and Omega, beginning and end, First and Last, ascribed, sometimes to Jehovah, and sometimes to his Christ? The fact itself I will cheerfully allow; and I answer, because, in the same manner as God is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end over his whole created universe, so Christ, "the *image* of the Father," "the head over all things to his Church," "the faithful witness, the first-begotten from the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth," (see Rev. i. 5.) was, in these interesting and most sacred respects, the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, with regard to his church, or to the great gospel dispensation, introduced and established by him. These views of the different relations, which God and Christ bear to each other and to the world, and of the titles ascribed to them in the New Testament, present to my own mind, whatever they may do to others, a harmony and consistency, which, on any other supposition, would be exchanged for doubt, confusion, perplexity, and contradiction. They are as dear to me, as more literal doctrines and explanations are to others. These views cherish no sin within me, they repress no religious emotion, they lower not the gospel scheme, they still represent God alone as the original basis, designer, and support of the whole; they provide for the indefinite exaltation and regard of his Son, the Prince of the moral universe, and they have, I hope, too much of heaven in them to exclude me from that blessed place merely for embracing them. Should I be denied a reward at last, it will be, I deeply and fearfully feel, on far other grounds than an attempt to make Scripture consistent with itself.' pp. 12, 13.

Then follows a caution to the editor and to the Methodists generally.

'I believe the Editor of the Wesleyan Journal to have been perfectly conscientious and well meaning in his endeavours to defend the Trinity. But I would amicably submit to him whether he had better not in future ascertain the arguments of Unitarians in favour of their interpretations of Scripture, before he pronounces on the latter so harsh and severe an accusation, as that they shut men out of heaven.* You ought to think

* See Matt. ch. 25, last 16 verses, where the conditions imposed by Jesus Christ of admission into, or exclusion from the kingdom of heaven, are very different from those in the Wesleyan Journal. Moreover, according to 1 Cor. vi. 10, *Revilers* stand as poor a chance for heaven as Unitarians.

long and seriously, tenderly, and learnedly, before you presume to excite the suspicion and jealousy of the common mind against men, who have studied the Scriptures as perfectly as yourselves, have consciences as pure, and souls as valuable as your own. Do you suppose, that we deliberately misinterpret the Bible? Do you suppose, that many of us have not been brought into what we esteem God's marvellous light through many unwilling struggles, alarms, and tears, until we were absolutely compelled at last either to avow our belief in the strict Unity of God, or remain hypocritical worshippers before him? Think of the difficulties of scripture language, and of the vast variety of interpretations that must necessarily arise in reading so ancient a book. I repeat that we *must* be tender and candid to each other on these subjects, which we can be without compromising in the least the paramount cause of piety and morality. Is not the Wesleyan Journalist aware how Calvinists might denounce the excellent man whose biography he lately recorded, and who interpreted the important word, *sanctification*, by what would to them appear a loose and dangerous meaning, viz. *perfect love*? Moreover, in No. 3, of the Journal, the writer of the Berry-street Sermons, who is there quoted, after attempting to defend the doctrine of the Trinity, admits, that, to say that, "three are *one*, in the same sense, and in the very same respect, in which three are *three*, would no doubt be a contradiction in terms." What then becomes of the Athanasian Creed? When I apply the admission just laid down to the doctrine of the Trinity, as far as I comprehend it, that doctrine vanishes all away into empty air, and leaves Unitarianism as the only solid and unassailable basis of relief. In short, the admission itself is rank Sabellianism. But no farther on this track at present.

'Let me conclude with seriously and affectionately cautioning the Methodists, now that their better days are coming, not to be lavish of the acrimony and persecuting language to which their own sect has formerly itself been but too much exposed. It is not the way to conciliate and increase converts; but it drives some away in disgust and sorrow, and it feeds the worst passions of those who remain behind. How childish, moreover, to be calling names, and dooming this one and that one to hell! Does it not at least reveal a woful poverty of argument? Unitarian churches have been filled rather than emptied by these bitter denunciations from abroad; for after all, men will venture to such places, with the curiosity that leads youth to creep to the brink of precipices, to see what is there. A glorious prospect on a safe footing often rewards both kinds of adventurers.'

pp. 13—15.

There is one expression in the article from the Journal, the preeminent absurdity of which must have been perceived by the writer of the reply, though he suffered it to pass in silence. If our readers will turn back to the commencement of that article, they will see that it runs thus ; 'Unitarian principles, *if true*, shut all men out of heaven.' Now let us attend to this a moment. If Unitarian principles are *true*, they must of course be approved by God, who is a God of truth ; and they must furthermore be expressed in the bible, which is God's word ;—and yet they 'shut all men out of heaven ;' that is to say, the very same book which contains God's promises of heaven, is also full of principles, coming from the same God, which must necessarily and forever exclude men from it !

This *reasoning* puts us in mind of an anecdote told us by a friend, respecting a conversation which he once happened to have with a clergyman of the establishment, in a country town in England. After the discussion of several indifferent topics, the clergyman began to lament, in a most pathetic manner, the increase of Unitarians, not knowing that our friend was one of the number. He went over the common charges against them, grew angry at the bare recital of their doctrines and apostacies, and at last exclaimed, 'Why Sir ! if I thought that Unitarianism was taught in my bible, I would throw it into the fire !' In other words, his attachment to the articles of his church was stronger than his attachment to the bible ; and he was attached to his bible, because he was persuaded that it included the articles of his church ; and if by any means he should lose that persuasion, away went his bible !

We are aware that both this man, and the author of the article in the Wesleyan Journal, must be rather simple of their kind ; and that the more sensible among the orthodox would indignantly disclaim such expressions as we have cited. But we are not aware that such men are scarce, or that they are destitute of influence with the many ; and while they continue to dispense their strange declamations, and so long as they are able to affect the minds of the people by them, we see no possible harm, but on the contrary much probable good, that may result from a proper refutation of them. And if we are asked, what we call a proper refutation, we answer, exactly such a one as that which has just passed under our notice ;

not that it is the only one which we have, but because it is the nearest at hand, and the last of the many we have read.

Since the above notice was written, and while it was waiting for the press, two other pamphlets have been received from Charleston, which were occasioned by further offence from the Wesleyan Journal. They are more local in their character, and warmer in their temperature than the first. Not that we would find fault with them, on either of these accounts. The new articles in the Journal were of a local nature themselves, and were to be answered in like manner; and they were moreover so pert, undignified and sophistical, that they could hardly be replied to except in a tone, occasionally at least, of indignant contempt. A controversy thus protracted, however, though it may be of a final good efficacy on the spot of its origin, cannot be of much general interest, and we decline pursuing it. We will only mention one thing which comes out in the course of the dispute, which is, that the 'Antidote' was taken by the Editor of the Wesleyan Journal, without the usual acknowledgment, from an old volume of the Arminian Magazine, published by Mr Wesley. This is his own confession, and is alleged in defence of himself!

ART. III.—*A View of the Internal Evidence of the Christian Religion.* By SOAME JENYNS, Esq. Princeton, N. J.

SOAME JENYNS is one of those from whom it is impossible to withhold censure, and to whom we ought not surely to refuse praise. That he possessed qualities, which entitled him to esteem, and were fitted to inspire affection towards him, as a man, and had some vivacity and was not destitute of skill and vigour, as a writer, has never, we believe, been called in question. He lived much in the world, and is said to have exhibited great sweetness of temper, an easy flow of wit, and affable and engaging manners. He was for thirty eight years successively, a member of Parliament, but appears never to have taken an active part in debate. His pursuits, especially in early life, were chiefly literary. He was known to his cotemporaries as the author of numerous fugitive pieces, with which at different in-

tervals, during a long life,* he sought to amuse or instruct the public. Much of what he wrote, however, is now forgotten, and we know not that it is worth being remembered.

Whatever be his merits as an author, they are shaded by gross faults. He is more sprightly, than profound, and more ingenious than solid. He is bold, sweeping, and incorrect; often glowing and eloquent, but full of extravagance and paradox. We know not whether we ought, in many instances, to feel more surprise at his premises or conclusion; at the train of reasoning he pursues, or the end for which he employs it. His thoughts are clothed in an attractive dress; but his speculations are at war with common sense and with each other.

His poetry, for he attempted poetry, is light and trifling, and though praised at the time, has long since sunk into neglect. He aimed, however, only to be gay and amusing, and what he attempted, he perhaps accomplished. He confined himself to topics capable only of inspiring local and fugitive interest, and the charms which his subjects wanted, were not supplied by any deep kindling of the imagination or feelings.

He wrote 'Disquisitions' on several subjects, in one of which,† he attempts to revive the old doctrine of the pre-existence of the human soul; the sum of which, as he states it, is, that 'man-

* Born 1703—4, died 1787. The following entry, originally made in the registry of burials for the Parish of Bottisham, by William Lort Mansell, then Rector of that Parish, may be gratifying, as an obituary notice at once chaste and feeling.

'SOAME JENYNS, in the 83d year of his age.
What his literary character was,
The world hath already judged for itself;
But it remains for his Parish minister to do his duty,
By declaring,
That while he registers the burial of
SOAME JENYNS,
He regrets the loss of one of *the most amiable of men,*
And one of *the truest Christians.*
To the parish of Bottisham he is an irreparable loss.
He was buried in this church, Dec. 27, near midnight,
By William Lort Mansell, sequestrator,
Who thus transgresses the common forms of a Register,
Merely because he thinks it to be
The most solemn and lasting method of recording to posterity,
That the *finest understanding*
Has been united
To the *best heart.*'

† Disquisition III. Works, Vol. II. p. 141. Ed. Dub. 1790.

kind have existed in some state previous to the present,' in which 'guilt was incurred,' and 'depravity contracted;'—that 'this world was formed for a place of punishment as well as of probation; a prison, or house of correction, in which we are a while confined to receive punishment for the offences of a former, and an opportunity of preparing ourselves for the enjoyment of happiness in a future life.' Some curiosity may be felt to know by what train of reflection he satisfied himself of the truth of this hypothesis; and as the reasoning he employs in its defence is characteristic of his general manner, we shall not hesitate briefly to state it.

He begins by declaring, that the hypothesis alluded to is 'undoubtedly confirmed by reason, by all the appearances of nature, and the doctrines of revelation.' The following is one of the arguments, or rather assertions, for it is nothing but mere assertion, which he employs in support of it. 'Reason assures us, that an immortal soul, which will exist eternally after the dissolution of the body, must have eternally existed before the formation of it; for whatever has no end, can never have had a beginning, but exist in some manner, which bears no relation to time, to us totally incomprehensible; if therefore the soul will continue to exist in a future life, it must have existed in a former.'

He has more of the same quality. He then proceeds to consider the appearances of things; and pours out a long strain of querulous eloquence on the subject of the unhappiness and misery of man, intended to confirm the conclusion, that we were sent hither to be punished for the vices of a former state.—It is easy for a person disposed to take melancholy views of life, to draw a gloomy picture of the sufferings of humanity. But such pictures, we need not say, are necessarily unfaithful. They are delineations of human nature only under certain incidental modifications. They represent only its deformities, its weaknesses, and its maladies. They are shapeless and blurred portraits. They may fit the inmates of a prison or infirmary. But are we to take the unfortunate or degraded occupants of prisons and infirmaries as the true and sole representatives of the condition of human nature on earth? Yet such are the portraits, which Jenyns asks us to survey, and then expects us to admit, that the present life is 'intended for a state of punishment, and therefore must be subsequent to some former, in which this punishment was deserved.'

He would have us believe, that revelation teaches the same doctrine; 'for although perhaps it is nowhere in the New Testament explicitly enforced, yet throughout the whole tenor of those writings it is every where implied; in them mankind are represented as coming into the world under a load of guilt;—'Christianity acquaints us, that we are admitted into this life oppressed with guilt and depravity.' Now as it is absurd to suppose, that 'guilt can be contracted without acting, or that we can act without existing,' he thinks the evidence of a pre-existent state too clear to need any 'positive assertion; as if a man at the moment of his entrance into a new country was declared a criminal, it would surely be unnecessary to assert, that he had lived in some other before he came there.'

The author has here fallen on a real difficulty. All guilt is by its nature personal, and supposes will and action. How then can a person be said to be 'born under a load of it?' How can it attach to one not yet in being, or not capable of willing and acting? We know of no other way of removing this difficulty, than to reject, at once, the doctrine of native hereditary depravity. But Soame Jenyns was not much in the habit of calling in question the truth of received doctrines on account of their extravagance and absurdity. By a strange perversity of mind he turned that extravagance and absurdity into an argument for their divinity.

His 'Free Inquiry into the Nature and Origin of Evil,' among the remarks it drew from several quarters, called forth the masterly, but, perhaps, harsh and illiberal criticism of Johnson. The 'Inquiry,' however, is superficial and unsatisfactory, though somewhat pretending and arrogant, and not free from occasional absurdity. It is not surprising, that if Johnson condescended to notice such a work, he should chastise with an unsparing hand. In fact, he poured forth a strain of invective, to which the annals of literary criticism furnish few parallels. How it was received by Jenyns we have no means of knowing. It does not seem to have drawn from him any immediate reply. Perhaps he feared to engage with his gigantic antagonist. At all events, he appears to have submitted in silence, until a second edition of his 'Inquiry' was several years after called for, in the preface to which he attempted a sort of defence; but with the mildness and forbearance, for which

he is said to have been distinguished, carefully abstained from reflections of a personal nature. That he felt deep resentment against Johnson, however, is evident from an epitaph of six lines, which he wrote on that great critic and moralist, and which his editor, Cole, was indiscreet enough to insert in his collection of Jenyns' works. It has not more force and point than coarseness and vulgarity.

Of the works of Jenyns the 'View of the Internal Evidence of the Christian Religion' is, at the present day, most read, and undoubtedly exhibits most power. We think, however, that its merits have been greatly overrated. It has been, and perhaps continues to be popular with a class of Christians of the school of the late Thomas Scott, who tells us, that when read by him it deeply impressed his mind. We are willing to allow, that it contains much important matter. We assent to many of the author's views, and feel the charms of his eloquence. It would be foolish to condemn it altogether, or assert, that it is the production of a weak or contemptible intellect. But we feel justified in affirming, that it bears the stamp of genius rather than of wisdom, and of ingenuity rather than good sense and judgment.

Whatever be its merits, it has prominent faults. We think it fitted to convey some impressions very injurious to Christianity. We feel the more anxious to point out its errors, as it is written in a style somewhat captivating, and in a tone of confidence and dogmatism adapted to impose on the superficial and unthinking, at the same time, that it holds out views, which, pursued in their consequences, tend to produce scepticism and infidelity.

The subject of which it treats, the Internal Evidences of Christianity, is certainly an important and interesting one, and we agree with the author in thinking, that it has not been 'considered with that attention it deserves.' We add, it is a subject, which is every day growing in importance and interest. Without going into the inquiry how far the alleged miracles of Christianity are fitted to keep alive a veneration for it in future ages, we feel no hesitation in saying, that the time has come when the attention is to be more and more directed to the indications of its origin borne on its features—to the cast of its doctrines and morality—to its tendency, spirit and object. These are evidences, of the force of which all feel capable of judging. They are more within our reach, fall more immediately under

our observation, than some other species of evidence. The understanding easily gathers them up, renders them familiar, holds and weighs them. They are not of a perishable character, not temporary and fading. They multiply and strengthen with age. They have a sort of universal presence; they are felt, wherever Christianity is received. The evidence from miracles, however satisfactory, is by its nature more local and confined. It overpowers the understandings of spectators; but time takes something from its freshness and strength.

For ourselves, we are disposed to rely much on the marks of a heavenly origin, which Christianity bears on the face of it. We think, that we may appeal with confidence to its internal evidences. They form one of our strong holds, which we do not fear ever being compelled to surrender. Should it be abandoned, Christianity would be in great danger of falling. Let it be admitted, that no marks of divinity are visibly stamped upon its form, we might feel some distrust of other evidence in its favour. If it could be shown to exhibit marks of imperfection, if its doctrines should appear weak or irrational, repugnant to the known character of God, and to the best sentiments and feelings, and noblest aspirations of human nature, we should feel compelled to reject it. No support it is capable of deriving from prophecy or miracles would be sufficient to preserve in our minds a veneration for it.

The importance we ascribe to this class of the evidences for Christianity renders us solicitous, that works designed to present them in a popular form should be free from gross deficiencies and errors. We wish to see them explained and illustrated in a forcible manner—in language fitted to reach the understanding and heart. There is much in them, we conceive, when faithfully stated, adapted to impress both.

The work of Jenyns does not satisfy us. It contains several very exceptionable passages, and is, in some respects, faulty in its general spirit, views and tendency.

Christianity has greatly assisted the reasonings of the moralist; and has, undoubtedly, had the effect of gradually introducing into the world a more pure and elevated tone of moral feeling, than it found at the time of its appearance. This it has accomplished, partly by forbidding gratifications, feelings, and pursuits, which were before fostered or permitted by public sentiment, and partly by strengthening and exalting dispositions, affections and habits, which had been overlooked or neglected.

Among the 'false virtues' rejected by Christianity, Jenyns, it is well known, places patriotism and friendship. But as his reasoning on the subject of these virtues, has, we suppose, few abettors, and has been often enough censured, we shall take little further notice of it than merely to say, that it affords one among numerous proofs the author has left us of great defect of judgment. One or two observations occur on the subject, which we cannot forbear stating.

Christianity, we know, inculcates 'extensive benevolence.' It is in some sense true, that 'a Christian is of no country, he is a citizen of the world; and his neighbours and countrymen are the inhabitants of the remotest regions, whenever their distresses demand his friendly assistance.' But we are not aware, that universal benevolence excludes affection for individuals, or local collective bodies of men. We should think just the reverse. It is idle to talk of love for the whole, where there is no love of parts; or love of the species, where there is no love of individuals. Our good will should embrace the whole family of man. But there are parts of that family with which we come in more immediate contact, and which are therefore more within the reach of our good offices. There are parts, too, which, from the nature of social relations, have stronger claims on us than others. We are connected with our country by more intimate ties than with other nations. We owe it more gratitude. We have greater opportunities of contributing to its prosperity and happiness, and of thus augmenting the general stock of human enjoyment. It ought then to share most of our affections and cares.

Patriotism, we are told, commands us to 'oppress all other countries to advance the imaginary prosperity of our own.' This is not true. Patriotism, we conceive, no more than other feelings, should be left wild and uncontrolled. It has its laws and is subject to restraints. Those laws and restraints are the everlasting and unchangeable obligations of rectitude. The desire to confer 'imaginary' or real benefit on our country does not sanction injustice and oppression. We suppose, that few better patriots have lived in ancient or modern times than the Athenian Aristides. Yet Aristides, in a well known instance, opposed a project admitted to be advantageous to his country, alleging as his sole reason, that it was unjust.

Our author's reasoning on the subject of patriotism, if it prove any thing, proves too much. It is equally applicable to all the relations of social life. It goes to show, if it is worth anything, that all particular affection for our associates, our connexions, and families, all paternal, filial, and conjugal affection—more than this, all particular regard to ourselves, is forbidden as criminal. But we have already bestowed more time on it than it deserves. The remarks on friendship are liable to the same objections as those on patriotism; and their fallacy may be shown by a similar train of observations.

With the enumeration of the distinguishing virtues of Christianity, 'poorness of spirit, forgiveness of injuries, and charity to all men; repentance, faith, self-abasement, and a detachment from the world,' we are not disposed to find much fault. It is accompanied with several pages of remarks, most of which are just, though we occasionally meet with language and illustrations, with which we are not quite satisfied. The picture, we think, is a little overcharged. There is a little exaggeration and extravagance in some of the author's statements.

On the subject of the doctrines of Christianity, we find more to censure in the work before us. We object to the assertion, that Christianity 'exhibits distinct pictures of the joys of another world.' We have always regarded it as one proof of the excellence, and one mark of the truth of Christianity, that, while it asserts explicitly, that the feelings and habits, which are formed and strengthened now, extend an influence beyond the grave, it does not attempt to remove the veil, which hides from our view the condition of the spiritual world. Impostors and enthusiasts, from Mahomet down to our own times, have yielded to the temptation of indulging the imagination in picturing out the invisible and bodiless future. The poets set the example. Homer was followed by Virgil and Dante. But the theme was too alluring, and thought to be too important to be abandoned to the poets. It was soon forced, by piety, or fraud, or fanaticism, into the service of religion.

All pictures designed to present distinct images of a future life, however, it may be superfluous to say, must from the nature of the case be inadequate. They can never exalt and can hardly fail of degrading our conceptions. They are adapted only to rude minds in the infancy of civilization and refinement.—We suppose few, at the present day, have so gross

ideas of heaven as to imagine, that we surround a gorgeous throne, and are occupied solely in chaunting hallelujahs there, or that we shall find 'white robes,' and 'palms,' and sceptres necessary to our happiness. We view heaven as a condition of spiritual natures, furnishing rich, intellectual and moral gratifications. Of the nature of those gratifications we can hardly be supposed, at present, immersed as we are amid surrounding matter, capable of forming any distinct conceptions. Christianity does not attempt to reveal it. The representations it furnishes of a future state are popular and figurative; they hold out certain forms to the imagination; but those forms are dim, vague and shadowy. This feature of the religion of Jesus is of some importance. It goes to illustrate the pleasing fact of which every day is furnishing additional confirmation, that Christianity is fitted not merely for rude and ignorant times; it is suited to the human mind after the largest advances made in knowledge and refinement. It is suited to those lofty and undefined aspirations, those mysterious and far-stretching hopes, those fond longings after a more intellectual form of being, which characterise a thinking and contemplative age. The world has not stood still since the time of its appearance. Much has been learnt; and the human intellect has on the whole gone forward. But the value of Christianity has not been impaired. No parts of it appear obsolete. We detect in its doctrines none of that narrowness and imperfection, which time usually brings to view in the productions of man.

Our author proceeds to point out some further characteristics of Christianity. 'No other religion,' he observes, 'has attempted to reconcile those seeming contradictory, but both true propositions, the contingency of future events, and the foreknowledge of God, or the free will of the creature with the over ruling grace of the Creator.' Does Christianity, we would ask, attempt this? We remember no passage in the New Testament, no passage in the whole Bible, which bears the semblance of any such attempt. Of the truth of the propositions alluded to we say nothing. A discussion of it would plunge us into the deepest abstractions of metaphysics, and demand more time than we feel willing to bestow. Besides, we do not think such discussions generally either very instructive or useful. Theologians have been too fond of obtruding them on the world. The consequence has been, they have perplexed

their own understandings without benefiting the understandings or hearts of others. While they have been employed in vain, futile reasonings on points of the most abstruse nature,

‘ And found no end, in wandering mazes lost,’

the simple instructions of the Gospel have been forgotten or neglected. Christianity has been robbed of all its richer and more attractive attributes, its air of heavenly majesty and loveliness; the whole of religion has been reduced to a few meagre, pedantic and frigid doctrines, which neither satisfy the intellect, nor warm and expand the affections.

The sacred writers, with very few exceptions, are characterized by great simplicity. They resort to no nice reasoning; they never go out of their way to obviate objections, or remove difficulties, never interrupt their narratives by attempts to define and explain; never stop to point out in what manner doctrines or views, apparently repugnant to each other, are capable of being so modified and restrained as to harmonize. They claim not to be philosophers or metaphysicians. They relate in simple and unstudied, though often figurative expressions, what they saw and heard; they employ the language of feeling and sentiment, and their narratives partake of that indefinite character, uncertain extent and vagueness, which are inseparable from a popular, warm, and figurative style. Some expressions they employ in reference to the doctrines specified by our author, and others of a similar character, if taken in their literal and most obvious sense, are embarrassed with numerous difficulties. The question is still open to discussion, how far and under what modifications those doctrines are meant to be asserted. Whether or not they are found in the bible, is an inquiry with which we have, at present, no concern. All which we contend for is, that in the whole compass of the Old and New Testaments, no one argument is employed with a view to reduce them to harmony. No attempts are made to explain them in language of technical accuracy, to show in what sense they are repugnant and overthrow each other, and in what sense they are capable of standing, and afford mutual confirmation and support. Christianity is intended for the use of plain understandings, and does not therefore concern itself with those airy speculations, which few can comprehend, and by which none are made better. It was designed, not to correct an er-

roneous philosophy, or erroneous metaphysics, but to reform men's depravity and vices.

We object to other passages in the work before us; but it is time to notice one or two faults of a more general nature—faults, we may say, which characterize the whole performance. The first is a disposition to dogmatise. This disposition betrays itself in all our author's writings, and in several instances, we lament to say, appears to be accompanied with no small share of illiberality of feeling. In fact, we believe, that the two qualities are almost uniformly found united. He who is in the habit of resting his cause on bold, hardy assertion, has seldom much tenderness for the feelings, or much respect for the arguments of his antagonist. Few writers have afforded stronger manifestations of such a habit than Soame Jenyns. He does not appear to have possessed a mind either very profound or comprehensive. He has frequently an air of originality, which is found, we think, on examination, to be only eccentricity. His views of the distinguishing doctrines of Christianity are, for the most part, such as were entertained by the commonest minds of the age. He employs no argument to defend them. All is downright unblushing assertion. The 'sum and substance' of Christianity, as he views it, is original depravity and human probation—'mankind come into this world in a depraved and fallen condition—they are placed here to give them an opportunity to purge off this guilt and depravity;'—their inability to perform this of themselves; the necessity of a 'vicarious atonement' in order to the forgiveness of sin. 'If Christianity is to be learned out of the New Testament, and words have any meaning,' these doctrines, he asserts, form parts of it.* They have been transmitted to us in words 'as clear and explicit as the power of language can furnish'.† He calls them 'facts,' and characterizes those who oppose them, as persons, who 'pretend to disprove facts by reasoning,' and who 'have no right to expect an answer.'‡ Of the 'Atonement' particularly he says, that whoever denies, that it is found in the New Testament, may, 'with as much reason and truth,' assert, that in the works of Thucydides and Livy 'no mention is made of any facts relative to the histories of Greece and Rome.'

Such language, we need not say, is wholly unworthy of a man and a christian. However it might have been received

* Works, Vol. II, p. 178.

† Ib. p. 388.

‡ View &c. Prop. II.

at the time it was uttered, it is as little congenial with the charitable feelings, as with the spirit of true philosophy, prevalent at the present day.—Was Soame Jenyns ignorant of the distinction between *fact* and *opinion*? Did he know no difference between a doctrine expressly asserted, distinctly announced in the bible, and one, which is founded on remote inference and reasoning? He believes, that certain doctrines are taught in the New Testament; others, as honest and industrious, perhaps, find no traces of them there. Whether they are there or not is altogether matter of opinion. No one has a right to assert, that they are. This is to arrogate to himself authority to settle controversies in matters of faith. It is to assume the attribute of infallibility, and demand of others a surrender of their understandings and judgments. As Protestants, we claim the privilege of deciding for ourselves, what the instructions of the bible are. If a fellow-christian, partaking of the same fallible nature as ourselves, and responsible for his opinions to the same master, undertakes to affirm, that certain views he has adopted are without doubt, doctrines of Christianity; that to deny that they were taught by our Saviour is as absurd as to deny, that any mention is made of facts of any sort in the historical narratives, which have been transmitted to us from former ages;—we may blame his arrogance, or pity his delusion; we can never feel veneration for his understanding.

The work under review, and others of the same author, are disfigured by one fault, with which we are more disgusted than with their dogmatical spirit. It has been felt, that nearly the whole of that class of doctrines, for which he is an advocate, is encompassed with difficulties. They have appeared to be at war with our understandings and moral judgment. To compel us to yield assent to them, it has been urged, would be to inspire that distrust of human reason, which would sweep away at once the whole mass of external evidence for Christianity, and go, in fact, to invalidate all evidence whatever, by leaving us no capacity by which we can judge of its force. To these objections Jenyns attempts no reply. He allows, that the doctrines alluded to are, or appear to be irrational; that, according to the best conceptions we are able to form of them, they bear the features of absurdity; but those features, with his characteristic fondness for paradox, he asserts are evidence of their

heavenly origin. We shall quote a few expressions as specimens of the general strain of language he employs on this subject. What the 'sum and substance' of Christianity, according to Jenyns' views, is, has been stated above.—'And so adverse,' he observes, 'is it to all the principles of human reason, that if brought before her tribunal, it must inevitably be condemned.'—'To prove the reasonableness of a revelation is in fact to destroy it.'*—'In all these propositions,'—containing doctrines similar to those abovementioned,—'there appears not even a pretence to probability, and therefore, as they cannot be inventions, we may reasonably conclude, that they must be true.'†—'That three Beings should be one being, is a proposition, which certainly contradicts reason, that is, our reason; but it does not from thence follow, that it cannot be true.'‡ Of God's dispensations, he observes, 'their seeming impossibility may be a mark of their truth, and in some measure justify that pious rant of a mad enthusiast, 'Credo, quia impossibile.'||—'Had this revelation been less incomprehensible, it would certainly have been more incredible.'§

Such language sounds very strange in the mouth of an advocate for Christianity. We are sorry for the cause of religion, and for the honor of our common nature, that it should ever be employed. Christianity cannot fail of receiving deep injury from it. It is just the sort of language to generate infidelity. In an age of profound darkness, men may be made to feel a blind reverence for forms and opinions the most childish and extravagant. They love and venerate mystery. But as the mind begins to feel and put forth its strength, and men's views become consequently less confined, gross, and material, they demand something which is capable of furnishing occupation for the understanding. They are dissatisfied with the marvelous, dark, and undefined. They feel no veneration for doctrines, which shrink from investigation. They reject, at once, such as ask them to renounce their reason and their senses, under whatever name of mystery they shelter themselves.

The present age, we trust, needs not be told, that Christianity cannot demand an assent to what is irrational, without abandoning itself to contempt. The moment it asks us to give up our understandings, the moment it inculcates distrust of hu-

* Works, Vol. II, p. 178—9.

† View &c. Conclusion.

‡ Ib. p. 369.

|| Ib.

§ Ib.

man reason, it furnishes weapons for its own destruction. It overthrows itself by teaching the fallacy of those capacities, which are employed in establishing it. Is it possible, that such a mind as Jenyns' could have been ignorant of the consequences, which would be drawn from his concessions? He appears to have occasionally felt, that the evidences of Christianity gather strength in proportion as its doctrines are found to harmonize with nature. He speaks of particular views it inculcates, as consonant with reason and confirmed by her conclusions. Yet the tendency of his work is to leave an impression on the minds, especially of the more susceptible and confiding, that the distinguishing doctrines of Christianity, so far from borrowing support from reason, are opposed to its decisions. Of this tendency we complain. We lament it as greatly impairing the influence, which might be hoped from the more unexceptionable parts of the work. We lament it, too, as unfriendly to Christianity. As such we cannot help viewing it.

We have said, that Jenyns showed illiberality of feeling. As an instance of this, we might mention the charge he brings against 'rational Christianity' of being only deism in disguise—only a worse sort of infidelity. 'The professed deist,' he says, 'gives Christianity fair play—but the rational Christian assassinates her in the dark.*' Such language, with numerous sarcasms against the 'Rationalist,' thrown out in different parts of his writings, is beneath criticism. It can excite only pity and contempt. The more moderate of all parties view it with disgust. It can, in the end, injure those only who employ it. It may have some influence, for a time, on a few weak and ignorant minds, but men of sense will despise it. They will not surrender their opinions to escape the unpopular epithets, and foul-mouthed calumny heaped upon them by narrow bigots, arrogant pretenders to illumination, or empty, conceited and dogmatising enthusiasts.

The internal evidences of Christianity open a wide field of remark. We intended to have offered a few observations on the several branches of them. We wished to give a general sketch—to present a few of the outlines of them. But we feel, that we cannot do justice to the subject in the few pages we are allowed to devote to it. A few remarks, however, we cannot forbear adding on a topic, which we can hardly bring

* Works, Vol. II, p. 184.

into view too often, and on which it would be difficult to say too much.

What then are the marks of divinity, which Christianity bears on the face of it? We might point, in the first place, to its tendency and end. We might say, that it proposes to itself the noblest object—that of refining and exalting intelligent and immortal natures. It is not occupied with the care of the senses; it feels solicitude not for the perishable interests of earth merely; it views those interests as vain and empty in comparison with others. It is anxious chiefly to fit us for those richer gratifications, which spring from the soul—the imperishable part of us. It is desirous of ministering to the understanding and heart. It would infuse and strengthen those affections, feelings, and habits, which add to our dignity and happiness in life, prepare us to meet death with tranquillity, and fit us at last for a seat in the paradise of God.

It is impossible not to feel veneration for a religion, whose object is so beneficent and noble. We are prepared to believe, that such a religion is the gift of a Father's mercy. It proposes to itself views, which all the appearances of nature lead us to ascribe to God. Mind, and not matter, first occupies his cares. Mind is his noblest, best work. It bears the strongest impress of his hand. Of all objects he has formed, it participates most largely of a divine nature.—To form and endow mind, to confer on intelligent and moral natures the sublimest dignity, virtue, and happiness, of which they are susceptible, appears to be the one great object, which he has kept in view in all he has ever performed.

Christianity cooperates in the same design. It would form and educate spiritual natures for spiritual gratifications and employments. It would enrich us with pure, enlarged, diffusive, and heavenly virtue. This forms one of its distinguishing features. Other religions have had in view a temporary and inferior object. They have usually been the offspring of policy; they have aimed only at conferring benefits on man in the present life. They have been occupied chiefly with the outward and visible; they have operated feebly on the affections; they have sent no healing and sustaining influence to the heart; they have awakened no fervent aspirations after higher excellence and better modes of being. They had in comparison with Christianity, low, gross, and confined views. They bore

on the face of them the stamp of human imperfection and weakness. They were of earth, earthy. Christianity has a heavenly aim and object.

Its spirit corresponds with its object. It embraces all those qualities, which we are formed to venerate and love. To feel as a Christian is to have ardent and confiding piety; a deep sentiment of our responsibility; a strong abhorrence of sin, sorrow for the share we have had in it, and a resolution no more to incur the stain of it; fond breathings after a loftier measure of virtue; enlarged and feeling benevolence, embracing intelligent natures throughout the universe; warm sympathy; subjected desires and self-restraint; a chastened imagination, pure thoughts; meekness, humility, gentleness; deference to the feelings, pity for the distressed, indulgence and mercy for the failings and faults, of those around us; gratitude for benefits and oblivion of injuries. What more is necessary to form a character at once venerable and pleasing, happy in itself, and tending to impart happiness to others, fitted to adorn earth and occupy a place in heaven?

Yet where, we do not say in the *religions* of antiquity, where in the writings of her sages and moralists, is such a character held up as an object for the attainment of which we should be willing to sacrifice all the glories of the world? For those writings we feel, it is hoped, due veneration. From several of them there comes a voice of profound instruction. They contain stores of deep thought and grave ethical wisdom. But we should form no very favourable opinion of the head or heart of the man, who after carefully reading over the instructions of Jesus, should hesitate, for one moment, to admit, that those instructions are of a far more heavenly mould, that they send forth far more of a healing and exalting influence, than the purest and best strains uttered by pagan antiquity.

The aim and spirit of Christianity admit of a variety of rich and striking illustrations. The subject, too, has forcible attractions. But the object we have in view in these remarks, that of pointing to a few of what we conceive to be the strongest marks of divinity which Christianity bears on its features, does not require us to pursue it.

We pass to the doctrines of Christianity. If it be what it pretends to be, those doctrines must carry with them evidence of coming from the Author and Preserver of nature, and Father

of the spirits of all flesh ;—part of which is, that they be reasonable ; that they be found in unison with nature, with the known attributes of God, with the best sentiments and feelings of the human breast. Nothing but what is so can be venerated as a doctrine of revelation.

Many of the strongest prejudices, which have grown up against Christianity, and which have many times amounted to a rejection of it, have arisen, we are confident, from an idea that it demands a surrender of the understanding. Acquainted with it only in its most corrupted forms, men have viewed it as a monstrous and extravagant fiction. Its doctrines, as they have been offered to their minds, have appeared chargeable with impiety, and gross, palpable absurdity. They have seemed to divest God of that character, which all within and around us leads us to view as unchangeably belonging to him. They have robbed him of his noblest attributes of goodness and compassion ; they have held him up to our minds as the author of injustice and cruelty ; arbitrary, capricious and unfeeling, first willing our guilt, and then punishing us with bitter and everlasting woe for being guilty. As they have cast a shade over the divine attributes, so they have left a stain on human nature. They have ascribed to it features of black, inherent, and universal depravity, by which according to the best information derived from our own hearts and from observation, it is not characterized ; and which, if they really belonged to it, would overthrow all responsibility and virtue. From such chilling, and, as it has appeared to them, impious and immoral doctrines, they have felt compelled to turn away ; and a great deal of open infidelity, we are satisfied, has been the consequence. Of those, who have stopped short of this, many have fluctuated in uncertainty, or have been filled with gloom and distrust. They have been haunted with a suspicion or feeling, that the instructions of Christianity partake of something of the marvellous or irrational, and that it requires, therefore, some effort of credulity to admit their truth. Until this feeling is overcome, the strongest arguments for the truth of Christianity, drawn from testimony, from its correspondence with ancient predictions, from the time and manner of its introduction into the world, and its growth and prevalence in subsequent ages, will appear no better than cold and feeble abstractions.

We are confident, however, that this feeling may be removed; but not till the mass of corrupt doctrines, which have for centuries overshadowed Christianity, is finally destroyed. Those doctrines can never be objects of veneration in a refined and intellectual age. We rejoice that they are fast falling away. Their hold on multitudes of minds has been shaken. More rational views of Christianity are rapidly extending. We look forward to their universal diffusion, as an event, which will revive that reverence for the instructions of Jesus, which, in consequence of gross mistakes about their nature, has been partially withheld.—It would not be difficult to show that Christianity—we mean such as it is found in the Bible—Christianity divested of the encumbrances, with which human pride, or folly, or fanaticism, or imposture, the refinements of speculative understandings, and gross conceptions of weak minds, have loaded it,—teaches nothing, which is irrational, nothing which common sense and the common feelings of humanity compel us to reject; that whatever monstrous and absurd doctrines fallible mortals have inculcated as forming parts of it, its genuine features are not deformed and gloomy;—that it wears a venerable and attractive form;—that there is nothing chilling in its looks, nothing adapted to inspire dejection or melancholy in the mode in which it addresses us, nothing in its whole air and spirit fitted to terrify the imagination and shock the feelings. Far from it. Its language is echoed from all within the breast, and from all the mute forms of nature;—it utters sentiments, which all facts in the history of matter and mind, all the sublime instructions breathed from the earth, the air, and majestic overhanging heavens, unite in confirming. Nor have the evidences of its truth and adaptation to human nature been weakened by the progress of human intellect and growth of civilization in modern days;—they have gathered strength from age;—time, which has blotted out venerable empires, and shaken into dust the most solid fabrics of human genius, has only caused the beautiful and majestic proportions of Christianity to stand out in more bold relief.

These are topics, which he who would inspire a deep veneration for Christianity, should not neglect. He must show that it is reasonable. It may oppose our prejudices and correct

our misconceptions ; it may impart instruction, which lay beyond the reach of our unassisted powers ; it may teach that which our feeble capacities, if left to themselves, could never have found out ; but it can inspire no distrust of those capacities ; it utters no denunciations against human reason. It is intended, not to prostrate, but to assist and exalt intellect. It informs us of what was unknown, but never shocks us by absurdity. It quickens and instructs conscience without weakening our confidence in its decisions—without blotting out our moral natures. It is not at war with the understanding and with nature ; it is a firm ally, and friend, a counsellor, assistant and strengthener of both. These are strongly marked features of Christianity. They are features on which, in consequence of the corruptions of Christianity, too little stress has been hitherto laid, and they have therefore been but imperfectly explained and feebly illustrated.

The object and spirit of Christianity and cast of its doctrines, prepare us to admit its claims to a divine origin. Had it grown out of the ordinary efforts of human nature, we should have expected it to partake of human imperfections ; we should have looked for some resemblance to former productions of human genius, for some marks of grossness, for some traces of the tone of thinking and feeling prevalent in the country from the bosom of which it sprung. None of these features characterize it. We find in it no weak parts ; no vestiges of human imbecility and ignorance. It opposed the maxims and spirit of the age ; it held out doctrines, which flattered none of the illiberal or corrupt prejudices of the people among whom it had its birth ; it appeared furthest removed from a narrow, temporizing spirit ; it extended its cares to the whole family of man ; it embraced all subsequent times, and connected the interests of both worlds.

A sketch of the internal evidences of Christianity, however brief and hasty, would be imperfect without some notice of its author. The character of Jesus has many traits of surpassing excellence. Attempts have often been made to describe those traits, and, to render the portrait more striking, several comparisons have been formed. The subject, we conceive, is not yet exhausted. Much may still be done for the more full illustration of it. It is a subject, which the advocate for Christianity should not carelessly pass over. It is one around which, if he have feeling and skill, he may throw powerful attractions.

It holds a language to the heart, and is therefore peculiarly fitted to exert an influence over more warm and susceptible natures. In such natures the understanding takes counsel of the affections. Obtain sway over the latter, the former will not be slow in yielding. The character of the founder of Christianity, however, furnishes matter for profound argument, as well as occasion for the more delicate breathings of a simple, and pathetic, and feeling eloquence. It is of a nature, we should think, to engage, in some degree, the attention of the speculative, cold and skeptical.

No person, however obtuse his sensibility, who has thoroughly studied the character of Jesus, and reflected on the age and place in which it was produced, will hesitate to say, that it is a very extraordinary one. It must be admitted to be perfectly natural, and of a kind, which renders it impossible to believe, that it could have been a forgery of the imagination. It is too much to suppose, that a few illiterate men, who should have set about forming a fictitious character, would have portrayed one so totally unlike all which had before appeared in the world, and so much superior to the age in which they lived. It was too exalted a conception, too wonderful a portrait to have presented itself to their imaginations. Had they attempted to draw such a portrait, it would have been little short of miraculous, that they should have succeeded. They could not have thrown into it such an air of truth, and yet assigned it so many qualities, which are rare, and would seem not easily to blend and harmonize. No, it must have been a conception taken from a living original. And how, it may be asked, was that original formed? For, it will be recollected, Jesus had none of the advantages of wealth or rank; he was surrounded by no bright constellation of intellect; he had scarcely a tincture of human literature, or human philosophy; yet he uttered instructions, and bore a character, which had the air of something more than human. Is it to be supposed, that his mind, acted upon by surrounding objects, or impelled by its own reflections, originated those deep, far reaching and sublime instructions, or that his own will and energy, without assistance from above, formed that character, so fitted to draw all hearts, and compel the homage of all understandings? Do the known attributes of our nature authorize us to ascribe such an effect to any exertions of the human intellect?

The evidences of Christianity, from its own character, appear to thicken around us in proportion as we become familiar with it. We have alluded to a few of those, which have most force, and will bear to be most dwelt upon. There are others, which are less tangible, less easily defined. They are to be felt rather than formally stated. They partly grow up with time, and with an intimate use of the instructions of Jesus. The sorrows of life, the gradual falling away of the objects of our earthly affection, and the effects of age in impressing us with the hollow nature, the uncertainty and emptiness of all worldly pleasures and distinctions, tend to render us more and more sensible of the needs of spiritual natures. Christianity is found to answer those needs. Its capacity of ministering to our growing wants daily develops itself. The language, in which it addresses us, appears no earthly voice. It has heavenly power and majesty.

The character of Christianity, and of its founder, adds vast weight to the external evidence in its favour. It forces us to conclude, that it is not the offspring of fraud or fiction, that it is the child neither of fanaticism nor imposture. It is noble in its aim and beneficent in its tendency. It is such a religion as we might suppose our Father in heaven would bestow on us. It is recommended to us by its intrinsic excellence—its spirit, its object, its doctrines, and its sanctions.

If we throw off a reverence for Christianity, where shall we go for information on the subject of our duty and hopes? Where shall we find a substitute? Where shall we find a system so free from imperfection and deficiencies; so full of instruction and solace; so well adapted to refine and exalt our natures; so fitted to make us faithful to the numerous important trusts committed to us as men, as citizens, as servants of God and candidates for the rewards of a better life? On what shall we rest? We are weak and imperfect;—as such, we need guidance and restraint; we are exposed to attacks of adversity, to affliction and sorrow, and need comfort and support. Christianity furnishes all. It addresses itself to our hearts in language, which mere philosophy is incapable of employing. Suppose it founded in delusion; we could hardly wish that delusion to be pointed out to us; for our most sacred hopes would be overthrown, and the sources of our best consolations become dry. Suppose it founded in delusion; the delusion is fitted to make us better and happier. It is a pleasing, not a melan-

choly delusion. It is pleasing to believe, that the universe has a Father and Preserver. It is pleasing to believe, that this short life is not the whole of our being; that an immortal spirit is lodged within us; that we may hereafter go, where sorrow and care, and disease and death can no more reach us. But Christianity, we are confident, is no delusion; the hopes it inspires are not fallacious; the virtue it attempts to infuse is something more than a name. We would preserve in our minds, and in the minds of others, a deep veneration for it. If we throw off such veneration, our hopes are weakened, but our apprehensions and fears remain; our solace is impaired, but our sorrows are not diminished.

A work of merit on the internal evidences of Christianity is, at the present day, much needed. We wish that some one, qualified to execute it successfully, could be found willing to undertake such a work. Those who have hitherto attempted performances of this kind, lived in times when Christianity was greatly darkened and disfigured, and their productions partook of the narrow and corrupt spirit of the age. But Christianity has now thrown off the heaviest encumbrances of error. The garb of human workmanship, which had been drawn around it in multiplied folds, is falling away, and its genuine form is daily becoming more fully exposed to view. It is time that a popular work were attempted, which should awaken the attention of the slow and careless to the impress of divinity which that form bears. A work of this description is more wanted, and, if happily finished, would be productive of greater benefits than any work we could name. But it is not one, which admits of being executed in haste, or by a feeble hand. The topics alluded to in the foregoing remarks, form a part only of those, which should be introduced and illustrated in such a performance. The doctrines of Christianity must be fully stated, accompanied, perhaps, with some incidental notice of the laws of criticism and interpretation, which are employed in establishing them. But the length to which we have protracted our observations admonishes us to forbear. We have thrown out such suggestions, as we deemed important. We submit them to the judgment of our readers.

Notices of Recent Publications.

6. A Discourse delivered at the Dedication of the Stone Church of the First Parish in Portland, Feb. 8th, 1826, by J. Nichols. With an Appendix, containing a Memoir of the Parish. Portland. James Adams, Jr. 1826.

THIS is a sensible and very appropriate discourse ; not one, indeed, in which the author shows his greatest reach of intellect, but a discourse which demonstrates the deep interest he felt in the occasion, and which breathes throughout a spirit of true christian kindness, and of tender regard to the people to whom he ministers.

'No sentiment,' he says, 'more strongly suggests itself or more elevates this present moment to our feelings, than that we have come together to officiate in consecrating to God an altar and a memorial to outlast ourselves ; where our children may be reminded of his everlasting truths, and where incense and a pure offering may go up to him from generation to generation. We are now then to consider what it would be worthy for rational and christian men to set forth for the glory of God and the perpetual memory of mankind ; what all times shall be able to understand ; what shall have power to live through all vicissitudes of opinion ; what no future progress of the human mind shall probably pronounce to have been of transitory importance, to have passed away with the period, or to have been unworthy of this occasion.' p. 4.

The following extract is written in the spirit of charity of which we have spoken.

'Again, in endeavouring to speak in the proper spirit of this occasion, we desire explicitly to set apart this house in the most cordial fraternity with the whole christian family. We are not suffered to forget, that in consecrating it to God, we have resigned it to him and to his church, and are bound to hope, that we have done it not only with piety to him but with suitable sentiments of fellowship toward them also. We wish not to exclude them by any interpretations of ours so as not to leave them in the fullest enjoyment of their own. And we should desecrate, we fear, the sacred nature of this duty, by terming it prudence or even charity. It is more than either. It is holy and solemn justice to the prerogatives of conscience and to the spirit and precepts of our religion.' p. 10.

The 'Memoir of the Parish' appended to the sermon, is judicious and entertaining, and we should like to see this commendable practice followed on all similar occasions.

7. A Sermon, preached February 15, 1826, at the Dedication of a New Church, erected for the Use of the South Parish in Portsmouth. By Nathan Parker, Minister of the Parish. Portsmouth, N. H. John W. Foster. 1826.

WITHOUT being less appropriate to the occasion on which it was delivered, the sermon now before us, is more occupied with unfolding general principles, and has less of what is of merely local interest, than the one we have just noticed. In

other respects, what we have said of that discourse may, with but slight modification, be said with equal propriety, of this. To call it an eloquent sermon, would be to give it higher praise than it deserves. But not to say it is the production of no ordinary mind, or to deny that it has beauties, would be doing it a worse injustice. The author's thoughts appear to be always clear, just, and well defined, and are not unfrequently conveyed to us with great force of expression. An extract or two will not only justify our remarks, but lay before our readers views and feelings which we most cordially approve, and would have circulated as widely as possible.

'That holiness,' says the author, 'which christianity labours to produce, is no fanciful, or arbitrary, or useless thing. It supposes, that all the faculties of man are good, and that they are all brought to perform their appropriate offices. Christians are introduced into the temples of God, to worship him, not as an almighty tyrant, and with such sacrifices as a tyrant would delight to receive, but as a Father. While their understandings adore him, their affections learn to cling around his attributes. They go not from the sanctuaries of religion, from their schools of piety, to cloister themselves from the world, lest they should tarnish their purity by mingling in the transactions of men; but they go forth to obey a Father's commands, and to imitate the perfections, which they adore. They are to stand forth amid all the temptations of life, and to be preserved from pollution by the strength of their principles, and the purity of their taste, breasting the storm and gathering strength from its violence. They are to show, amid a host of moral dangers, a divine purity; and their christian virtue is to be estimated by the fidelity of their obedience, by the amount of their usefulness, compared with their means of doing good.' p. 5.

To the inquiry, by what means is this holiness to be produced, it is replied, that

'Truth is the mighty agent to be employed to render man a partaker of a divine nature. Through the instrumentality of truth he is to be born into the kingdom of Christ and of God. By the sword of the spirit he is to make a successful defence against the enemies of virtue, and to gain a victory, whose laurels will never wither. And truth, to become the powerful instrument of man's regeneration, must be known, believed, felt, and obeyed. To be known, the truth must be intelligible. An unintelligible article of belief is a contradiction in terms. It is as impossible to believe a proposition, the terms of which are not understood, as to see objects, on which not a ray of light is permitted to fall. It is not by unintelligible articles of faith, that man is born to virtue and to God; but by truth, which is perceived, clearly perceived. It must also be believed and felt. With the heart man believeth unto righteousness. To become a powerful moral agent, truth must interest the affections. If it deeply interest the affections, it will be obeyed. If the truths of the Gospel, the truths, taught by Jesus Christ and his apostles, be perceived, believed, felt, and obeyed, man is blessed, he is prepared for that immortality, which Jesus has revealed.' p. 6, 7.

These, to be sure, are very simple and common views, and recommend themselves to every understanding. But then how far are some of them from being orthodox! Again—

'We have a creed, we believe a creed, and we love the principles of our faith. We trust in God, that those, who come up hither in all future time,

will find the light of the glorious Gospel of the blessed God beaming forth here, guiding their minds, comforting their hearts, and directing their affections and hopes to that world, where is no darkness at all.

'But while we assert the necessity of a creed, we as unhesitatingly assert, that it is not only every man's privilege, but every man's duty also, to form his own faith by the best use of the powers, and means of knowledge, with which God has furnished him. No formal professions of faith in doctrines, which are either clearly or darkly set forth, will have any good effect upon the character. The truth must come fairly into the mind and heart; and a few truths thus embraced may work wonders. That the mind may be urged to activity in acquiring the principles, which are to be its nourishment and its health, it must feel its responsibility, the infinite consequences attached to a faithful use of its powers, and be left at perfect liberty to learn what Jesus has taught, and what man ought to believe; and there should be no odium attached to our open avowal of opinions, which have been formed in uprightness. Thus a becoming confidence will be expressed in the cause of Christ, and the truth, as it is in him, may be expected in all its simplicity and loveliness to beam forth upon the minds of men.' pp. 8, 9.

We would gladly follow our author further, but that we have already exceeded our limits. Appended to the sermon, however, is a note, containing, besides several 'memoranda' for the history of his parish, some remarks and statements respecting the terms of Christian communion, which, as they add the force of example to opinions we have long held ourselves, we cannot refrain from laying before our readers.

'There is pressing need, that the terms of Christian communion be rendered more simple, more truly evangelical. All good men, who believe in Christ, ought to be encouraged to come together around the table of their common Master, forgetting speculative peculiarities, and holding steadily in view the great purpose of christianity, which is to make men truly good. This has been a favourite principle of the South Church. It has been thought, that the introduction of it fully into practice is of the highest importance. A disposition has ever been manifested among us to receive all into Christian communion, who acknowledge Jesus to be a teacher, sent from God, and who manifest a disposition to learn his truth, and to obey his commands. Errors they might embrace (and who is free from them?) but it has been believed that the most promising way to correct error is to administer the truth in love, and to encourage men to use all their Christian privileges, and to perform all their duties, unembarrassed by party creeds.

'We are gratified to be able to state, that this is no new principle in the churches of this vicinity. Among the sentiments of the associated ministers of this vicinity, expressed in a report, made in 1790, is the following, which was adopted by this church; "That the profession churches have a right to demand, is not an assent to any human creed, confession, or summary of Christian doctrines; but a general profession of faith in Christ, repentance of sin, and the hope of the mercy of God, through him, expressed either in words or writing, as the person offering himself shall choose." When these sentiments were recommended to our churches, the Piscataqua Association could boast a Stevens, a M'Clinck, a Haven, and a Buckminster. It ought to be a subject of congratulation, that the South Church has never abandoned, but has steadily maintained these sentiments. Till they are more widely embraced, we can have but feeble hope of the peace of Christ's church.' pp. 18, 19.

8. *The Spirit of Prayer.* By Hannah More. Selected and Compiled by Herself, from various Portions, exclusively on that Subject, in her published Volumes. Boston, Cummings Hilliard & Co. 1826.

WE are glad to see republished this portion of the writings of one of the most popular and venerable religious authors of the age. We are aware that the sentiment of admiration for her works has not been felt without exception; and that while one class has carried it to an almost idolatrous excess, another has found little in them to affect or improve. This may be in no small degree accounted for from the peculiar faults of her composition, her *dulcia vitia*, which form its charm with many, but which are offensive to more. Yet her great devoutness of mind, her high standard of christian attainment, her zeal for virtue, her intimate acquaintance with the human mind and heart, and her consistent, persevering devotion of her fine powers, through a long life to the instruction and improvement of others, demand and ensure for her the respect and gratitude of all. In her present advanced period of life, this is the last publication, which she can probably superintend. It consists of selections from those parts of her various works which treat of the subject of prayer and the cultivation of a devotional spirit, arranged under appropriate titles. Perhaps no portions of her works have been esteemed more valuable by her admirers; and they will be gratified at finding these scattered passages and chapters collected under one cover.

9. *A Discourse delivered at the Opening of the Christian Meeting House in Boston, at the corner of Summer and Sea Streets, Dec. 29, 1825.* By Simon Clough, Pastor of the First Christian Society in the City of New York. Boston. I. R. Butts & Co. 1826.

THE Christian denomination, so numerous in some parts of the country, has for many years had one Society in Boston; and recently has erected, principally, we understand, through the instrumentality of one zealous member, a spacious and commodious house of worship. It is gratifying to witness this mark of its prosperity, not only because it is desirable that every class of believers should have full scope for the display of its doctrines, but because this class, being zealously devoted to the instruction of the people, and at the same time, exemplary advocates of Christian liberty, cannot fail of a good influence upon that portion of the community. A sermon like this of Mr Clough would have good influence any where. It is a strong and ardent defence of Christian Liberty, the love of which, Mr

Clough tells us, has always characterized this denomination. He defines what he understands by this term, illustrates from history the practices which have been inconsistent with it, states the obstacles with which it has to contend, and the reasons which exist for expecting its final triumph. He exhibits good sense and just thinking, and deserves great credit for the manner in which the subject is treated. The following passage will serve as a specimen of the discourse, and at the same time present the feelings of the denomination.

'The Christian denomination, with which I have the honor of being connected, have seen the consistency, and acknowledged the propriety, of these great principles of religious liberty, and have given the world a practical illustration of them, by founding upon them the churches that have been gathered by their instrumentality, and making them the principles of action in the administration of Church government. The Scriptures of truth are considered the only written rule of faith and practice among us, and each individual member is left at liberty to exercise and enjoy the right of private judgment, both as it relates to doctrine and practice. The only necessary prerequisite to become a member of a Christian church, is the christian character, and the only qualification necessary to secure and perpetuate that membership is a life of piety and devotion. We maintain that God is the sole arbiter of conscience, and that no devoted christian is, or can be accountable to any human tribunal on earth for believing the doctrines, and obeying the precepts of the gospel. That all such tribunals as are invested with dominion over the faith and practice of others are popish, tyrannical and antichristian, and that where they are established, they must become the bane of christian liberty. Churches have a right, when an individual member renounces the christian faith, becomes contentious, introducing divisions into the body, or is immoral in his conduct, to put such a member away; but not for exercising the right of private judgment,—for this equally belongs to all.' pp. 15, 16.

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10. A Discourse, delivered in Charleston, S. C. on the 21st of Nov. 1825, before the Reformed Society of Israelites, for Promoting true Principles of Judaism, according to its Purity and Spirit, on their first Anniversary. By Isaac Harby, a member. 8vo. pp. 40. Charleston, A. E. Miller, 1825.

THE formation of such a society, as that before which this first anniversary discourse was delivered, is one, and a very striking evidence of the universal tendency of the age to improvement. Even among the Jews, it seems, attempts are making at religious reform.

'Our desire,' says Mr Harby, in stating the designs of his society, 'is to yield every thing to the feelings of the truly pious Israelite; but to take away every thing that might excite the disgust of the well-informed Israelite. To throw away Rabbinical interpolations; to avoid useless repetitions; to read or chant with solemnity; to recite such portions of the Pentateuch and the Prophets, as custom and practice have appointed to be read in the

original Hebrew ; but to follow such selections with a translation in *English*, and a lecture or discourse upon the Law, explanatory of its meaning, edifying to the young, gratifying to the old, and instructive to every age and every class of society. p. 6.

Again ;—‘ It is but little we demand ;—to abolish the profane offerings and not insult us with bad Spanish and Portuguese ; to admit an English discourse, explanatory of the *Parasah*, or portion of the Law appointed to be read ; to discard the idle comments of the Rabbins, which have no connexion with the ancient Hebrew worship ; to be more dignified and more emphatic in reading, or singing the effusions of the Psalmists and the Prophets ; and to select the sublimer portions of these (appropriated to the day) and such other prayers as taste and piety can approve, to be said or sung in the *English language*. We wish to abstract, not to add—to take away whatever is offensive to the enlightened mind ; but to leave in its original grandeur whatever is worthy to be uttered by man, and to be listened to by the Deity.’ p. 8.

These are praiseworthy objects ; and, as friends to what is truly rational in whatever shape it presents itself, we cannot but wish they may be attained. The ‘ Discourse’ next glances at the history of the Jews since the destruction of their temple, and contrasts their comparatively degraded condition in Europe with their happier lot under the free and equalising institutions of the United States. The author has his occasional flings at Christians, to be sure ; but his performance is the production of a mind of considerable cultivation, and abounds with just and noble views of civil and religious liberty, which it might be well for Christians themselves more generally to embrace. The following sentences are pregnant with volumes of practical wisdom, which we recommend to our Societies for the Conversion of the Jews, and Christians generally to read.

‘ As enlightened ideas are the result of Freedom, so bigotry seems inevitably to spring from persecution and slavery. Had the Jews been treated with justice and humanity ;—had the character of modern Rome been as tolerant on the subject of Religion as that of ancient Rome—the tenacity with which the Israelites adhered to their ancestral customs might gradually have relaxed, and they would, in a measure, have melted into the common mass. Nothing causes men more to resemble each other, and to feel for each other, than EQUALITY OF RIGHTS. Prejudices vanish when we are not molested for them. But oppression naturally begets hatred.’ pp. 24.

We wish we could say as much for the rhetorical excellencies of this piece, as we have for its merits in other respects. But it is written in a style not a little too gorgeous, displays in its periods too much of eastern magnificence, for these colder and less imaginative regions.

11. Hints to Parents, in two parts. Part I, on the Cultivation of Children. Part II, Exercises for Exciting the Attention, and Strengthening the Thinking Powers of Children, in the Spirit of Pestalozzi's Method. From the Third London Edition. Salem. Whipple & Lawrence. 12mo. pp. 72.

THE fault we might find with some of the details of the plan of domestic education marked out in this little work, will be rendered wholly harmless by attending to the frequent cautions it contains, that it is not the *forms*, not the strict *letter*, but the *spirit* of the system, which is to be regarded; and we therefore unreservedly recommend these 'Hints,' in the unpretending way in which they present themselves, to the consideration of every parent. What is the great object of the work, and in what a sound reflection it had its origin, may be gathered from the two following sentences.

'The aim of Pestalozzi, is to excite in PARENTS the desire to take advantage of the invaluable opportunities afforded in the DOMESTIC CIRCLE, for fostering the infant mind in the simple, pure, and artless way which nature has traced; to inspire them with a sense of their DUTY, and of the widely extended and important consequences resulting from the neglect or the fulfilment of this duty.

'From an early domestic developement of HAND, HEAD, and HEART, the happiest results may be expected.' p. 3.

Intelligence.

The Present State and Prospects of Unitarian Christianity in Calcutta. We are happy to be able to communicate to the friends of enlarged and liberal views of Christianity, a few facts concerning the present state, and the prospects of our religion, in Calcutta, which, we think, cannot fail to be received with great interest, and to awaken the zeal among us, which has too long been dormant, that should be felt in the cause of extending as widely as possible the knowledge and blessings of the gospel of our salvation.

In a 'Brief Memoir,' which we have just received, 'respecting the establishment of a Unitarian mission in Bengal,' it is said, 'When the powerful influence, which the christian religion is fitted to exercise for the improvement and happiness of those who cordially embrace it, is duly considered, it cannot but be matter of serious regret, and disappointment, that the most zealous exertions of missionaries for its propagation in India have hitherto

been attended with very inadequate success. This subject has of late, more than usual, engaged the attention of the christian public ; and the failure is ascribed both to the *mode* in which missionary labors have been conducted, and to the *form* in which Christianity has been presented to the natives. Not the intelligent and learned, but the rude and ignorant, have been made the first and principal objects of missionary instruction ; and they have been taught doctrines, which, whether true or false, stagger the natural feelings, and uninstructed reason, of mankind ; and which, therefore, seem the least adapted to begin with, for the purpose of making a favorable impression upon minds, already preoccupied with the tenets of a different religion. On the ordinary principles which regulate human conduct and opinion, it would have been much more difficult to account for the success of such labors, than it now is to assign causes for the want of success in them.

‘ Under the firm conviction that the evidences, the doctrines and the precepts of the christian religion, have their foundation in the rational and accountable nature of man, and are as convincing as they are salutary to all who are capable of comprehending their import and willing to submit to their power, an attempt has been made, within the last few years, to obtain means for establishing a Unitarian mission in Bengal ; and, by the labors of Unitarian missionaries, for diffusing the knowledge, and inculcating the practice of christian truth and duty, in a mode and form free from the objections that have just been stated. The establishment of such a mission would include, *First*, the erection of a chapel for worship and preaching in the English language, as the means of exhibiting the principles, uniting the affections, and concentrating the exertions of its supporters. *Secondly*, the delivery of regular and familiar lectures in the native languages, and in the native parts of the city ; not with an immediate view to proselytism, but for the purpose of exciting, extending and directing, a spirit of inquiry upon moral and religious subjects, among the well-informed and influential members of the native community. *Thirdly*, the promotion of native education, with an especial view to improve both the moral and the intellectual character of the pupils. And, *lastly*, the preparation and printing of such books, as may appear to be required in the different departments of labor.

‘ A mission on these principles, and with these objects, has not yet been established in British India. Almost all that has been attempted, in regard to it, is, to obtain *means* for this purpose, and to create an interest in its accomplishment. The fol-

lowing statements will shew briefly the amount of means which have been obtained, and the degree of interest that has been excited respecting it, in different parts of the world.

'In Calcutta, the most promising field of operation for such a mission, a Committee, composed of both *European and native gentlemen*, has existed for the last three years, and has steadily, and successfully employed itself in calling the attention of the christian public in India, England and America, to this important subject. An Anglo-Hindoo school, that is, a school for the instruction of from 60 to 80 Hindoo boys in English learning, on the principles already described, as far as the difficulty of obtaining qualified teachers would permit, has been in operation during the same period, at an expense of 300 rupees—\$150—monthly. Subscriptions for a chapel have been obtained in Bengal, amounting to upwards of 12,000 rupees, or \$600, with which ground has been purchased in an eligible part of the city, and vested in trustees. And a library has been formed, denominated "the Calcutta Theological Library," open to the gratuitous perusal of all, under such restrictions only as are required for the purposes of its preservation; already comprehending, by donation or purchase, many very valuable works; and designed, with a view to facilitate the most extended comparisons and references, to include the standard theological works of the religions and sects of all nations and ages.

'In England, a Society has lately been formed, denominated 'the British and Foreign Unitarian Association;' one of the objects of which is, with especial reference to British India, to employ or assist missionaries in foreign countries, as opportunity and the means of the association may afford; and in the mean time to maintain correspondence and general co-operation. The subscriptions of the English Unitarians for the cause of Christianity in British India, amounted to £1535 15 10 sterling.*

'In America, also, an association has been formed, for inquiry concerning the state of religion in India, from which, as their first year's contribution, 1233 rupees have been received. Other contributions to the cause, which have been received from Boston, amount to 659 rupees.

'In general, it may be stated, that although as is believed, there are many Unitarian Christians in India, and although they are known to be both numerous and wealthy in England and America, yet it is only a comparatively small number in each of

* The subscriptions are principally for the purpose of the erection of a Chapel for Unitarian worship.

these countries, who have hitherto taken an active interest in the establishment of a mission in Bengal. *It is confidently hoped, however, that the interest which has been excited will increase, until it shall extend itself to the whole denomination; and that thus the means of carrying such a mission into effect will be gradually multiplied.*

We learn also by letters, which have just been received from Bengal, that the Calcutta Unitarian Committee held a special meeting on the 21st of November, 1825, at which it was unanimously resolved;—that this Committee have received with high gratification, information of the exertions made both in England and America, for the promotion of the objects of a Unitarian mission in Bengal; and pledge themselves to the continued zealous prosecution of those objects, to the utmost extent of the means which may be afforded to them.—At this meeting, also, the following ‘scheme for the permanent support of a Unitarian missionary in Bengal,’ was adopted by the Committee; and it was resolved, that means be employed to recommend it to the attention of the Unitarian public in India, England and America; and to obtain subscriptions for the accomplishment of its object.

‘1. It is proposed to form a permanent fund, of from 50 to 60,000 rupees,—or, from 25, to \$30,000,—in shares of 500 rupees each.

‘2. Each subscriber shall remain the *bona fide* proprietor of the share, or shares, which he has subscribed, with a view to their ultimate redemption by the mission; the interest, or profits, being in the meantime surrendered, should the proposed scheme be carried into effect.

‘3. When the interest, or profits of the shares, shall amount to an adequate revenue, it shall be employed in supporting a Unitarian missionary in Bengal, and in providing for his family.

‘4. Both principal and revenue shall be placed under the management of trustees, hereinafter mentioned, who shall be responsible to the share-holders, for the integrity of the former, and the due appropriation of the latter.

‘5. If the requisite amount shall not be subscribed within a period of five years commencing from the 1st January, 1826, the trustees shall realize in cash the property or securities in which the funds have been invested, and with the sanction of a general meeting of the subscribers in Calcutta, distribute them among the share-holders, to the extent of their claims for principal and interest. The surplus, if any, created by gratuitous subscriptions, shall be divided by the trustees among such Unitarian institutions, and in such proportions, as they may think fit.

‘6. If the requisite amount shall be subscribed within the above-mentioned period, the trustees shall on account, and for the benefit of the mission, repay to the share-holders the amount of their shares, as fast as subscriptions for that purpose are received.

‘7. The subscriptions received from England and America, and the donations made in India, for the support of a Unitarian missionary in Bengal, shall be applied, first, to the completion of the necessary amount; and, secondly, to the redemption of the shares.

‘8. The shares shall be transferable to other parties, at the pleasure of the share-holders, the same being notified in writing to the trustees.

9. The following gentlemen are proposed as Trustees, for the collection and appropriation of donations, and of the subscriptions of share-holders, with the power of supplying vacancies in their own number; viz. Rammohun Roy, Prusunnukoomar Tagore, W. Tate, G. J. Gordon, T. Dickens, and W. B. Mc’Leod, M. D.

‘10. No missionary shall enjoy the benefits of this provision, except by the election of the trustees.’

To this plan for securing a permanent mission in Bengal, we are solicitous to obtain the particular attention of our readers. We should, indeed, have felt no small hesitation, even concerning the propriety of grounding upon it any appeal to the christian sympathy and liberality of our friends, if it had come to us unattended by any more direct expression of the interest of Unitarian Christians in India. But we are happy in being able to append to it, a list of shares subscribed in Calcutta, up to the 9th of December, 1825.

G. J. Gordon,	10 shares	or	5000 rupees.
W. Tate,	10	‘	5000 ‘
Rammohun Roy,	10	‘	5000 ‘
Manuel Larruleta,	5	‘	2500 ‘
Jame Colder,	5	‘	2500 ‘
Dwarkanath Tagore,	5	‘	2500 ‘
Prusunna Tagore,	5	‘	2500 ‘
A Friend,	1	‘	500 ‘
	51		25,500 rupees.

‘It is hoped,’ we are told by the Secretary of the Unitarian Committee in Calcutta, ‘that the subscriptions’ there ‘will amount to 30,000 rupees; and that the remaining sum which will be necessary,—from 20 to 30,000 rupees, may be obtained from England and America.’ And, he adds, ‘it has given to

the committee the most unfeigned satisfaction to learn, that there are not only individuals in the U. States of America, who take an interest in the promotion of Unitarian Christianity in this country, but that some of these individuals have formed themselves into an association for inquiry upon the subject. When they view this fact in connexion with the almost simultaneous formation in England of an Institution, on a still more extended scale, for the promotion of Christianity in India, they cannot but regard the present period as constituting a new era in the history of Unitarian Christianity, and as affording an earnest of the ultimate attainment of those objects which the Calcutta Unitarian Committee, during the last three years, have been almost hopelessly endeavoring to promote.'

Says Rammohun Roy, also,

'The interest which the friends to religious truth in America and England, have taken in the promotion of our common cause, has successfully put in operation the feeling and spirit of those in Calcutta, who have that interest at heart. They have raised, in a period of less than a month, about 30,000 rupees, in support of a perpetual mission in Bengal; and have directed their attention to the erection of the long contemplated chapel, in the centre of this town. As far as my knowledge of them extends, I feel authorized to assure you, that the intelligent part of the Hindoo community has every inclination to join, or at least to support us; though many of them may perhaps have objections to the honor of being called christians, from aversion to a change in name, and especially in looking to the out-caste converts at Sheerampoor, who, among the natives, for several years, have passed by that appellation. One of the objects our friends here have in view in adopting the measure for the support of a perpetual mission, is, that our institution in Bengal may not be a continual burden upon the friends to liberal principles in England and America, who, we are well aware, have much to do in their respective countries, and much opposition to encounter in this work.'

These, we think, are strong facts; and we do not fear to leave them to act for themselves. Three or four years ago, had we attempted to call the attention of Unitarians to India, as a sphere for missionary enterprise, we might have been baffled by the inquiry, what encouragements or prospects have we of success? But when we can reply, as we now may, that the most remarkable individual in the literary world now living, is a Hindoo convert to Unitarian Christianity; that we are assured by this eminently gifted, and, as we have reason to believe, this good

man, that the intelligent part of the Hindoo community has every inclination to join, or at least to support us, in this cause ; and, that 30,000 rupees have been subscribed in Calcutta, towards a permanent fund for the establishment of a mission there, we hope and trust that it will be felt, not only that our encouragements are great, and that our prospects are bright, but that our duty in relation to this cause is most obvious, and most imperative. But this is not all. In Mr Adam, whose name is known more extensively than his character among us, we have a missionary provided, if we can find means for his support, most eminently qualified for the work ; who has not now to learn the native languages ; who is high in the confidence of the Unitarian Christians in Calcutta ; and of whom no orthodox Christian that knows him will speak lightly. We know not by what principles the will of God is ever to be inferred from events, if it be not clear and explicit in the facts which we have now stated. We may add, that in a list of twenty-eight names, which are before us, of subscribers in Calcutta for the chapel to be erected there, nine are names of natives ; and the respectability of their condition may be fairly concluded from the circumstance, that their voluntary contributions for this object amount to 2500 rupees. There is also on this list, a subscription, and it is not Rammohun Roy's, of 2000 rupees, by 'a convert to Unitarianism.'—Measures, we trust, will soon be taken to embody, and to inspirit the friends of liberal christianity in this cause ; and for ourselves, we say, with warm aspirations for that influence, without which neither our desires nor efforts will be efficient, *may God prosper them !*

Unitarian Meetings.—A few weeks since, a large number of gentlemen, delegated and invited from the several Unitarian Congregations in Boston and its vicinity, twice met for the purpose of taking into consideration the objects and claims of the 'American Unitarian Association.' At the first meeting, a unanimous vote of approbation was passed, and a committee appointed, who, at the second, made an able and interesting report, giving an account of the Association and its operations, and stating and combating various objections to its name and plans. At both meetings, the whole subject was discussed with a freedom and earnestness, which evinced the deep interest felt in it by the Unitarian body at large, and which we are confident will lead to important results to the cause of religious truth. Every objection to the institution brought forward, appeared to be satisfactorily answered by members of the 'Executive Committee,' who were present. At the second meet-

ing, the vote of approbation passed at the first was repeated, and resolutions pledging assistance were adopted with perfect unanimity. We hope this laudable example set by the Unitarians of Boston, will be followed throughout the country.

Religious Charities.—The following statement of the 'Receipts of Religious Charities, in 1824, 5,' in England, is taken from the Monthly Repository, No. 240.

<i>Bible Societies.</i>			<i>Societies of a Mixed Nature.</i>		
British and Foreign	£93,285	5 0	Christ'n Knowledge	£62,387	3 4
Naval and Military	2,615	2 0	Propag. the Gospel	32,016	14 5
Merchant Seamen's	911	4 7	Jews	13,715	2 1
<i>Missionary Societies.</i>			London Hibernian	8,143	3 11
Church	45,383	19 10	Continental	2,133	15 10
London	40,719	1 6	<i>Book Societies.</i>		
Wesleyan	38,046	9 7	Prayer-Book & Homily	1,781	12 10
Baptist	15,995	11 2	Church Tract Society	737	19 9
London Morav. Assoc.	3,568	17 3	Religious Tract	12,568	17 0
Scottish	8,257	4 3	<i>In Ireland.</i>		
Home	5,092	15 10	Hibernian Bible Soc.	6,728	10 4
<i>School Societies.</i>			Sunday-School Soc.	2,653	7 2
British and Foreign	2,114	19 3	Tract and Book Soc.	3,647	6 3
Sunday School Union	4,253	12 2	Irish Society	1,060	3 8
Newfoundland	701	0 6			
	£260,945	2 11		£147,573	16 7

In all £408,518 19 6, or \$1,815,639 89

Sunday School Society for Ireland.—We have before us the 'Statement' of this Society's Committee, from which it appears, that at the time of its first establishment in 1809, there existed but *seventy* Sunday Schools in all Ireland; that in its first year it assisted but two; but that, on the 13th of April, 1825, there were in connexion with it, 1702 Sunday Schools, with 12,837 gratuitous teachers, and 150,831 scholars, or one scholar in every forty-five of the whole population of Ireland, according to the census of 1821. It has issued, since its establishment, gratuitously and at reduced prices, 10,624 Bibles, 155,271 Testaments, 425,190 Spelling Books, and 1,698 Books of 'Hints for conducting Sunday Schools,' which are the only kinds of books it is ever to circulate. But the most important part of the 'Statement' is the following enumeration of 'results presumed,' on the authority of the Committee's correspondents, 'to be amongst the consequences of the *general establishment* of Sunday Schools.'—'The Sabbath no longer wasted or profaned, as the day for idle sports and petty depredations, but becomingly appropriated to its intended object, the acquisition of religious knowledge, and the enjoyment of devotional feeling—children trained up in the principles of Christianity—parents benefited by the lessons

and example of their offspring—the general habits and manners of the poor improved—domestic comforts promoted—the labors of parochial and other ministers facilitated—an increased attendance of both parents and children at public worship—the Holy Scriptures introduced and valued in families where hitherto they were unknown—a bond of connexion established between the different ranks of society—the rich made acquainted with the wants, and actual circumstances of their poorer neighbors, and induced to adopt other means for their relief and comfort.’

Apocrypha.—By a resolution adopted by the General Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society, on the 28th of last November, it appears that the Apocrypha was to be thenceforward absolutely excluded from all the Society’s Bibles. ‘What effect,’ says the Monthly Repository, ‘this resolution will have upon the harmony of this extensive society, remains to be seen. In some minds it may possibly give birth to other questions, which the most zealous Biblists would be slow to entertain; as for example, whether it be consistent with reverence to the sacred volume, with a love of truth or with honesty, to continue in the New Testament the Three Witnesses’ Text, 1 John. v. 7, which we believe nine scholars out of ten regard as decidedly spurious.’

Mrs Hemans’ Poetry.—There are few living writers whose poetry is at the present moment so popular among us, as Mrs Hemans.’ We have scarcely a periodical work, in which beautiful specimens of it are not to be found. For ourselves, upon looking back we find we are indebted to her for about one third of all the poetry that has appeared in our pages. If any other evidence of the very high esteem in which we hold this lady’s productions is required, it may be seen in the remarks with which we have introduced that fine piece of hers, entitled ‘The Voice of Spring.’* But we rejoice that even more of her works, than all we have yet seen published either at home or abroad, is about to be given to the American public. A volume is preparing for the press by Professor Norton of Cambridge, which, besides the ‘League of the Alps’ and other poems collected and sent out in manuscript by the authoress herself, will contain ‘The Siege of Valencia’ and ‘The Vespers of Palermo,’ with a selection from her other publications. The two works, whose titles are last mentioned, ‘are tragedies, which,’ says Professor Norton, ‘in a very different style, may be ranked with the best of those by Miss Baillie.’ The

* Vol. II. p. 124.

following extracts from the prospectus of the volume suggest considerations, which, we are confident, will engage for it the patronage it on every account so well deserves.

These tragedies 'are distinguished by their elevating and invigorating tone of sentiment, their richness of poetical expression, and their deep interest and pathos. They are, however, but little known among us. With the most beautiful of Mrs. Hemans' other poems, though they have never been published in this country, collected in a volume, all readers of taste and feeling are well acquainted. Her popularity among us is honorable to ourselves as well as to her, for her poetry addresses itself only to the best and purest feelings; and requires, perhaps more than any other, a certain degree of delicacy, refinement, and it would hardly be extravagant to add, holiness of mind, in order to estimate its full merit.'

'The editor of this publication has gladly undertaken it, from a wish to put into the hands of a greater number of readers, poetry so beautiful, and so adapted to excite high moral sentiment. He has however a further object,—a desire to transmit to the authoress some expression of the respect and admiration in which she is held in this country. He has therefore proposed to publish the work by subscription. The whole profit will be transmitted to her.'

Unitarian Publications.—Great complaint has hitherto been made by our friends in England, of the difficulties they have met with in obtaining a regular supply of American Unitarian publications. But Mr Rowland Hunter of London, we are told, has made arrangements by which these difficulties will be in a great degree removed. As a similar complaint may, with equal reason be made on this side the water, would it not be well for some person in Boston, to do us the like service in procuring a fuller and more punctual supply of English Unitarian works? Were there any one channel through which it might be understood all commerce of the kind was to be carried on, there would be more of it; and, though it would take time to induce all to seek their supplies in this way, yet, in the end, there would doubtless be but very few who would decline its manifest advantages.

Buckminster's Sermons.—Proposals have at length been issued for republishing in England, this admirable volume, of which a better edition than the one last printed among us, is much wanted here.

Obituary.

DIED at Northampton, Feb. 5th, Mr FREDERICK WILDER, aged 22, a graduate of the last year at Cambridge.

The death of any, but especially of the young, forcibly reminds us of the shortness and uncertainty of life, tends to rouse us to thought and action, and is calculated to impress religious principles. If those whose death we deplore, have filled up the short period they were allowed on earth, with usefulness, and have attained to high moral and intellectual excellence, we cannot but reflect, that the number of laborers for virtue and society is diminished, and are prompted to be up and doing. The characters of such, if held up to public view with discrimination and truth, must do good. The lives of the dead, who have died in the Lord, assume in the sight of men a peculiar sacredness. They are finished, and death has set its seal to them; the living are to be further tried. The former speak a more solemn lesson. They show what mortals can do. They animate the efforts of the strong; strengthen the feeble; give steadiness to the doubting; and charm all by the loveliness of moral and mental worth. It is, moreover, for the best interests of religion, that we should often be called to witness, how she can give stability and dignity in life,—a holy serenity, and a triumphant assurance in death.

Impressed with these views, we offer to our readers this notice of the character of Mr WILDER. For his friends and associates, their recollections are enough. In their own minds, they have his pure moral image, on which they will ever delight to meditate. Words cannot heighten its lustre,—scarce can they faintly reflect it.

His talents were of a high order—and he was faithful to the trust. He had that vigor of application, and that intense zeal in study, which are the almost certain passports to eminence. This appears from the extensive acquisitions he made in the six years he devoted himself exclusively to literary pursuits. His progress in ancient and modern languages was great. He mastered them with surprising facility. In the mathematics he particularly excelled. He seemed to proceed from theorem to theorem, and from one important deduction to another with the rapidity of intuition. It was in this department in the Seminary at Northampton, that he was laboring successfully for the good of others, and extending the bounds of his own knowledge, when he became the victim of disease.

In all the branches of a collegiate education, he displayed great activity and reach of thought. Whatever might be the subject, on which his powers were exercised, his ardent thirst for knowledge was at once apparent. But his ardor was duly moderated by a sound judgment, and nice discrimination. Though his imagination was fertile, he had not that fondness for exaggeration, for giving to small things the air of greatness, and throwing a false coloring over things of importance, which often attends upon genius. His love of truth made him delight to see things as they are—as they were fashioned by the hand of God. His ambition was of the noblest kind. He had none of that spirit, which prompts to exertion only because another is higher, or because vanity or pride is wounded. But, as his mind was enlarged, he had that honorable emulation, which is founded on a love of what is excellent and true, and a desire to let his light shine for the glory and happiness of his fellow-men.

All who were acquainted with Mr WILDER, will bear testimony to the fine qualities of his heart. Though modest and retiring, he had nothing cold or repulsive. His heart ever overflowed with kind and generous feelings. His peculiar frankness and sincerity quickly won upon the hearts of all who approached him. He appeared to harbor nothing in his

breast, which he was not willing should be seen and scanned. Though he could not but be sensible that heaven had endowed him with high intellectual powers, his estimate of himself was humble. He was remarkable for a delicate regard to the feelings of others, and therefore seldom gave offence. Few have lived with so few that were hostile or unkind towards them. Though his heart was thus warm and susceptible, his mind was nicely balanced. Reason and conscience were the guides of his life. In his conversation with friends, as well as in his actions, he manifested a sacred reverence for religion. The writer of this notice has enjoyed the privilege of conversing with him from time to time on religious subjects. He showed that if he had not made theology his study; if he was not learned in the language of religion, he had very much of its power. He searched his bible with care and interest, and received its doctrines and precepts with the desire of faithfully applying them as the rule of his conduct. He felt the religion of Jesus to be a religion of the soul,—that it should have a sovereign sway over the heart and life. We have good reason to believe, that he was imbued with that genuine devotion, that habit of thought and feeling, which answers to our relations to an all-wise, just, and holy God.

His last illness, which was a rapid consumption, continued for a month. His pains he bore with patience and firmness. When he was apprized of his slender hold upon life, he had something of that apprehension of death—that shrinking of nature at the thought of passing into an untried being, from which few of the wisest and best Christians, at that awful moment, are wholly free. But his fears were soon dispelled. The shock once over, his spirit gathered its strength. He was sensible of his prospects,—that they were bright and alluring,—that honor and distinction were almost as sure to him as life, if permitted to live. The prospect on which he dwelt with greatest earnestness, and which cost him the severest pang to resign, was that of usefulness, and of giving happiness to his relatives and friends. But he gave up all cheerfully, and for the last fortnight before his death, though deeply sensible to the kindness of those, who ministered to the comfort of his departing spirit, spent much of his time in religious meditations and devotions. He did not, with many, think death too solemn a thing for witnesses. He felt the sustaining influence of religion, and rejoiced to give evidence of it. Shortly before his death, he sent for a devoted friend, whom he had requested to be with him in that trying hour. He conversed with freedom on the solemn scenes, which were before him. He dwelt with delight, to use his own words, 'on the holy hopes' religion inspires, and expressed a full and cheerful confidence in the promises of Christianity. When he had united with his friend in prayer, he said he was willing to be gone. Soon after, he fell into a gentle sleep, from which he waked for a moment, only to enter on the sleep of death.

We mourn for him, as for one, who was an ornament to our nature; who would have contributed much to the improvement of mankind; who had drunk deep into the spirit of our religion; who displayed in his life, and attested in his dying moments, its purity and power. Premature as was the close of his earthly career, we bless God that he has lived; that he has left us his pure example; and that we are allowed to cherish the precious memory of one, in whom talents, virtue, and amiable manners were so finely combined. We bless God that we do not mourn as without hope. We are consoled by, and we joy in, the belief that he, whom many loved as their own souls, is in those brighter regions, where his exalted intellect and purified affections, find sublimer objects than earth can give, and where pain and death cannot enter.

List of New Publications.

WE regret that a list of only a few of the most important works recently printed, besides those we have already noticed or reviewed, is all we can give in this Number.

Hints on Extemporaneous Preaching. By Henry Ware, Jr, Minister of the Second Church in Boston. Second Edition. Boston. Cummings, Hilliard, and Co. 1826.

Horne's Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures. 8vo. 4 vols. Philadelphia. E. Littell.

Professor Stuart's Sermon, at the New Meeting-House in Hanover Street, Boston. Boston. 8vo.

A Sermon on the Doctrine of the Trinity. By E. Cornelius, Pastor of the Tabernacle Church, Salem. Andover. Flag and Gould. 1826.

Unitarianism, 'Sound Doctrine.' A Sermon, preached in Waltham, at the Ordination of the Rev. Bernard Whitman, February 15, 1826. By Nathaniel Whitman, Minister of Billerica. Cambridge. Hilliard and Metcalf. 8vo. pp. 36.

Christian Researches in Syria and the Holy Land, in 1823 and 1824 in Furtherance of the Objects of the Church Missionary Society. By W. Jowett, A. M. One of the Representatives of the Society, and late Fellow of St John's College, Cambridge. Boston. Crocker and Brewster, and Others. 8vo. pp. 364.

A Letter to a Gentleman in Baltimore, in Reference to the Case of the Rev. Mr Duncan. By Samuel Miller, D. D. 8vo.

Dissertations upon several Fundamental Articles of Christian Theology. By Samuel Austin, D. D. Worcester, Mass. 8vo. pp. 260.

A Collection of Essays and Tracts in Theology. By Jared Sparks. No. XI. Containing Portions of the Works of Jeremy Taylor. No. XII. Containing Selections from John Locke, Robert Clayton, Isaac Watts, and John Le Clerc's Works. Boston. D. Reed. 1826.

Remarks on the Character and Writings of John Milton. Occasioned by the Publication of his lately discovered 'Treatise on Christian Doctrine.' From the Christian Examiner. Vol. III. No. I. Second separate Edition, corrected. Boston. Isaac R. Butts, and Co. 1826.

Biblical Repertory. A Collection of Tracts in Biblical Literature. By Charles Hodge, Vol. II, Nos. 1 and 2. New-York. G. & C. Carvill.

Notices of the Original and Successive Efforts to improve the Discipline of the Prison at Philadelphia, and to Reform the Criminal Code of Pennsylvania; with a few Observations upon the Penitentiary System. By Robert Vaux, 8vo. pp. 76. Philadelphia. Kimber and Sharpless.

A Concise View of the Critical Situation and Future Prospects of the Slave-holding States, in Relation to their Colored Population. By White-marsh B. Seabrook. Read before the Agricultural Society, &c. Charleston, S. C. on the 14th of Sept. 1825. 8vo. Charleston.

An Attempt to Demonstrate the Practicability of Emancipating the Slaves of the United States of North America, and of Removing them from the Country, without Impairing the Right of Private Property, or subjecting the Nation to a Tax. By a New England Man. 8vo. pp. 75. New York, G. and C. Carvill.
